GROUND ZERO NEWS

DEDICATED TO EXPLORING ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO THE GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDERED COMMUNITIES

GROUND ZERO

May 1997 VOL. 5, NO. 5
COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

Colorado Springs Foundation is impacting the City; around the State, and Across the Nation!

FOUNDATION GILL

Philanthropist Tim Gill, here seen as Tin Man at Cheshire Ball Fundraiser, is the founder of the Gill Foundation

CC Graduate and former GZ President Katherine Pease has overseen the massive growth of the Foundation for the past two years as Executive Director

See Story by Ground Zero's Julie Cooper on Page four

GAY AND LESBIAN OUTGIVING FUND

Peri,often found lurking in Gill Offices, is believed by many to be the real force behind Gill Foundation!

Important events in May:

Holocaust Commemoration Program featuring Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Elie Wiesel May 7th See P. 9

S-CAP'S Black Tie Dinner featuring Joycelyn Elders May 3 See Page 8

queer's eye view©

by Frank Whitworth

A Lesbian Looks On

by Julie Cooper

It's 7:30 a.m. on April 1--election day. I am taking computer to hand to analyze election results not yet in and to speak of my determination some weeks ago to support the loser, John Hazelhurst.

When Mayor Isaac decided to retire, two candidates quickly entered the fray, Cheryl Gillaspie and Hazelhurst. At that time, believing that no other moderate could come into the race without condemning both to defeat and guaranteeing the unthinkable, the election of rightwinger Gillaspie, I endorsed Hazlehurst. At the time, my thinking was shared by many, many others.

Close to two months later, Marylou Makepeace began to float balloons for her candidacy and it seemed apparent that she would enter the race, accomplishing what I viewed the classic moderate/progressive tendency to self-destruction and, thus, the election of Gillaspie.

At this point, I did not think the issues and differences between Makepeace and Hazelhurst mattered. What mattered to me was that the city could not stand the election of a person as divisive as Gillaspie. My prime objective was to see her defeat.

It was my opinion that Hazelhurst had come into the race early, had done his homework of coalition building and had done his job of raising funds. I believed that he was the best bet to win and that Makepeace would only be a spoiler in the race--a not uncommon situation in Colorado Springs progressive and moderate politics.

It was not an easy decision for me to support Hazelhurst. Two years ago, when Hazelhurst voted against the Human Relations Coalition, I wrote: "Did I really vote for Hazelhurst? I will never make that mistake again," thus breaking the prime directive in politics by invoking the "never" word. Reminding myself that Makepeace voted with John on that issue and thus should have attracted my ire equally to John, I wrote to Makepeace an appeal not to run.

In this letter, I informed Makepeace of my concern that she would only be a spoiler, guaranteeing the election of the unthinkable. I told her that John was just too far ahead and that I did not view she had a chance--I felt that there was not enough vote for she and John to split and still win and that the election of Gillaspie would be her fault.

I also informed Makepeace that were the race just between she and Hazelhurst, I would be supporting her. Such a luxury, however, did not exist in this three way race and that I believed John would best be able to win the election and that I would give him my full support. The truth is there is little difference philosophically between John and Marylou and both have some flaws but--either would be better than Gillaspie.

Thusly, I made my bed but it was not until two weeks before the election that I lay in it. At that time, examining all the facts and looking at polls that showed Cheryl and John in a dead heat with Marylou trailing by 5%+ of the votes, a number of us from various aspects of the progressive and moderate community, determined to support Hazelhurst. Shortly thereafter, the *Independent* joined suit. I sent a letter of endorsement and handed out guide ballots to the gay and lesbian community.

The next ten days, however, proved unbelievably decisive. Gillaspie ran what can only what can be called a "stupid" and "inept" campaign. The race was hers to lose and, by God, she lost it.

Hazelhurst made some really stupid decisions and mistakes and failed to inflame support and a sense that he could win in the voting public. His hold on his early supporters was obviously weak.

Marylou ran an inspired stretch campaign that brought to focus her effort for the campaign, developed a sense that she could win and played on the positive aspects of her record and hopes for the future. Grassroot activities were enormous. Some significant endorsements came in for her from city employees and others and, finally, Mayor Isaac, breaking a promise that he would not do so, chose to endorse a candidate and that candidate was Marylou.

This was probably the coup de gras for John (signalling a move to commit to Marylou by a large, undecided vote and a move of marginal Hazelhurst and Gillaspie

Continued on P.15 See Queers Eye

Walk with me on an imaginary journey into a world of which few people are aware and even fewer understand; the world of the transgendered person. Walk in their shoes for a moment and understand.

I awaken, as I do every morning from a dream world where I romp through scenarios that my subconscious creates in order for me to deal with conscious life. In those dreams I'm a woman of strength; attractive, proud and secure.

In my semi-conscious, early-morning state, I become more aware of myself as a woman and my internal womanhood. I rise, stagger to the kitchen, grab my favorite coffee mug and pour. Ahh, the nectar of the gods. I turn towards the bathroom and feel the swish of my bathrobe against my thigh. It feels sensual. Yes, I think, today I feel pretty, and I feel like dressing up a little for work. Maybe a dress, and some make-up.

I walk down the hall, turn on the bathroom light and gasp at the stranger I see in the mirror. The image gazing back at me isn't Julie at all, it's a man. A man with broad, muscular shoulders and a hairy chest and who desperately needs a shave. Where is the softness I know should be there? Where are the gentle shoulders, breasts and waistline that I know I felt in my head and in my heart just a few minutes earlier?

Reality and caffeine slap me in the face and I remember all too well that my given name is John. I have a penis, and because of that, by all social accounts, I am considered a man and therefore must conform to the visual comfort zones of everyone else if I am to keep from loosing my job, my family, my friends.

But I'm daily loosing my sanity. I hate that thing between my legs. I hate the short, do-nothing hair. I should be putting blush on my face, not shaving it.

I sigh and walk toward my closet. I desperately want to wear the new dress with matching jacket that I bought last week. The sales lady was impressed with my taste when I told her it was for my sister. I smile to myself as I hold it up to my body and slip into the pumps I bought to match the dress. It feels so good, so right. I ache to wear them today.

Sadly, I know better. To wear this outfit to work would be professional and personal suicide. I angrily put the dress away and begin to put on my daily lie: grey suit (at least the long sleeves hide the scars on my wrists), black oxfords, white shirt and tie. I buy great ties.

At work I long to have lunch with the women: to discuss the latest movies or fashions, or just to enjoy that close camaraderie, to talk with humans whom I can relate to mentally and emotionally, to be with people who are like me, the me I am inside. Today I feel so isolated, so alone.

Sometimes, the women at work ask me for help in picking out ties for their husbands and boyfriends. I love that. They sometimes try to fix me up with their single girl friends. I don't like that.

I tried it once before, getting fixed up. We became very close, we were best friends and could talk about anything,, until she found the dresses in the back of my closet. I think she was falling in love with me. I tried to explain who I really am but she just didn't understand. She said I lied to her, led her on. How could I? She called me crazy and said she never wanted to see me again. She lost an image of someone she thought she loved. I lost my best friend. That's where the scars came from.

Instead, for mere survival, I force myself to engage in the manly talk. I read the sports pages so I at least sound knowledgeable, so no one will suspect my secret, so no one will know who I really am, that I'm really Julie, not John. I'd rather be reading *Working Woman*. I'd rather be dating that cute guy in marketing. I'd rather be wearing my new pumps. Sometimes, I'd rather be dead.

At night I race home to my tidy little apartment, relieved that I've made it through another day, angry that I had to endure another day. I quickly remove my lie-called-a-suit and slip into my favorite satin bathrobe, the cream-colored one with lace on the sleeves and collar. Making sure the drapes are drawn, as they are most of the time, I fix myself a drink and ready myself for another lonely evening. I do my nails, I read self-help books for women. I read *Glamour* articles on sexuality and how to please a man, I do the questionnaires at the end.

Then the urge to urinate pulls me back.

Continued on P. 5 See Lesbian Looks

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GROUND ZERO

Dedicated to securing and maintaining basic civil rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered citizens; and to promoting their participation in the community at large through education, coalition, and visibility.

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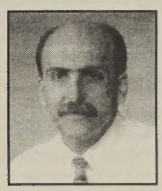
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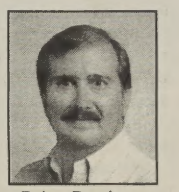
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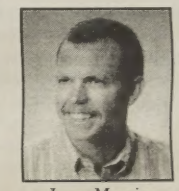
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FREE Sky Sox Baseball Radios Fri. 5/23 game time 6:35, gates open at 5:00. Free Radios for the 1st 1500 paid fans. *Presented by* ***Aaron's Rents and Sells Furniture & AM-1240 KRDO***

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The Gill Foundation

Modeling The Art of Giving

By Julie Cooper

Gill Foundation Executive Director Katherine Pease

Foundation founder Tim Gill (right) here pictured (right to left) with Brittany Weber, Cheshire Ball Coordinator; Mickey McIntyre, Gill Washington-Based Outgiving Project Director and Davol Tedder, PhD., Gill's Life Partner.

HISTORY

Back in the early 1980s, a young entrepreneur busied himself with building a software company that would soon become the leading choice in desktop publishing and in business across the country.

Roughly ten years later, Tim Gill realized that Quark, Inc. needed to be run in partnership for the business to continue to grow and expand successfully, so he sold part of his business to a real estate entrepreneur.

Shortly after that business transaction, Amendment 2 passed. Gays and lesbians in Colorado and across the country awoke on November 4, 1992 to the after shocks rumbling toward an uncertain and frightening future. Gill felt those after shocks as well, and decided that it was time to take some of the benefits that he had earned in building Quark and give them back to the gay and lesbian community in the form of a million dollar pledge in order to fight the thinking that brought about the passage of Amendment 2.

At an annual Quark users conference in Vail, Colorado, he made the comment during a question and answer period that he planned to give this million dollars to the gay community. Unknown to Gill, the room was filled with journalists who also happened to be Quark users. An Associated Press reporter immediately got on the phone and relayed this announcement over the AP lines.

Within hours, word was out all over the country that Tim Gill, founder of Quark, was giving a million dollars to the gay community. While he had never been closeted, and previously had given in much smaller amounts, overnight Gill became the very public gay philanthropist.

"One of the reasons I didn't give away money before Amendment 2 passed," Gill says, "is that I didn't ever stop to think about giving money away. I didn't know any other wealthy people and I hadn't grown up in a family with a tradition of philanthropy. I didn't even really know where to begin when it came to giving away money."

Gill's first million dollar gift went very quickly, and, understanding the great need for the gay community to grow and solidify, he began to give more. In 1993, Gill's philanthropy expanded to activism when he helped developed and organize the first Cheshire Ball committee, made up of activist and allies who believed that to positively impact the future of Colorado, they needed to raise the quality of the lives of its children.

In the fall of 1994, the first Cheshire Ball raised over $37,000 for the Child Abuse and Prevention Team at Children's Hospital. In 1995, it became Denver's hottest masquerade event that year raising over $54,000 for organizations dedicated to the prevention of youth violence. In 1996, the ball benefited schools and educational organizations across Colorado.

Each year, the number of organizations and corporate sponsors grows, and the Gill Foundation continues to fulfill its commitment to Colorado's youth by providing staff resources and underwriting some of its costs.

In the summer of 1994, the Gill Foundation became incorporated. During the previous twenty months, Gill and his assistant shouldered the monumental responsibility of reviewing all the grant applications, managing the funds and ensuring the donations reached the intended recipients.

"It was truly a passion of the heart," says Katherine Pease, executive director of the Gill Foundation, "but it lacked the institutional structure that Tim was looking for in a foundation."

Pease was hired as executive director of the Gill Foundation in January of 1995. Through a series of meeting, Gill and Pease decided that, though the foundation awards grants across Colorado and the country, it was strategically important to base the Foundation in Colorado Springs in order to have a positive voice representing the gay community where Amendment 2 was born. That year, the foundation gave away 1.1 million dollars in grants.

THE OUTGIVING PROJECT

Realizing the impact they were making and the increasing need for education and training in the area of fundraising, the Gill Foundation hired their second staff person in the summer of 1995, Mickey MacIntyre, former Development Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, to run the OutGiving Project. Outgiving, according to Pease, basically means being out about one's sexual orientation and one's philanthropy, simultaneously, especially one's gay philanthropy.

"Our implicit goal in the foundation that guides everything that we do," Pease says, "is to get more people to give more money to gay and lesbian organization and over time to grow the base of the funding support for the gay and lesbian community and the country."

To that end, the OutGiving Project was formed to raise the awareness and understanding of gay and lesbian activists, at both the local and national level, of how to do effective fundraising, which in the past has been severely lacking.

"We are very convinced that fundraising, more than anything, is a science," Pease emphasized. "It's really about developing a good fundraising strategy, a solid fundraising plan and asking enough people enough times to give and identifying those people." In essence, it's not so much that the gay community can't raise money, but that it tends to lack the essential tools in order to raise funds better.

That's why the OutGiving Project has become so important. MacIntyre, along with coordinating the philanthropic development of the Gill Foundation, holds technical trainings, fundraising workshops and board training sessions nationwide to give organizations and their boards these tools for effective fundraising. He also does general organizational development consulting. And these efforts are paying off.

"We've had many organizations that we've funded tell us that Mickey's services have been more valuable than the direct grants that were made to them," Pease observed. "They really do believe that the tools provided by the Outgiving Project have allowed them to become better fundraisers and more viable as organizations by developing and maintaining a long-term funding base."

The second thing the OutGiving Project participates in is donor resources; providing resources to gay and lesbian philanthropists to hopefully help them more think clearly about their giving and to help them become even better philanthropists than they are now. They do this by inviting nationally and globally known gay philanthropists and their allies to a conference in Aspen each year to help them discuss their philanthropy in a safe environment.

The OutGiving Project's goal is to create dialogue around giving, the best way to give, (i.e. do I give $10,000 to one organization or $1,000 to 10 organizations?) and how to deal with being wealthy when, too often, having money is equated with low morals, poor politics and a general lack of concern for the health and well being of people in general. And, if you're gay, how do you come out to family and tell them that you're going to give their hard-earned thousands to gay and lesbian organizations and dealing with the family and public dynamics surrounding that issue.

"We do encourage people to give according to the lavender screen," Pease said, "giving to organizations that have in their policies non-discrimination based on sexual orientation and equal benefits for gays and lesbians."

Continued on Page 5 See OutGiving

Gill's Colorado Springs office staff include Katherine Pease, Exec. Dir; Erika Shatz, Program Officer, Kelvin McNeill, Director of Communications and Community Outreach and Brooke Mountain, Office Manager/Executive Assistant.

Tim Gill officiates over presentation of check for funds raised at annual Cheshire Ball for children's programs

THE GAY AND LESBIAN OUTGIVNG FUND

continued from previous page

From the OutGiving Project grew the Gay and Lesbian OuGgiving Fund, started nine months ago. It's mission is to create awareness of the contributions gay men and lesbians make in society everyday. Convinced that gays and lesbians are contributing to a great number of organizations, only some of which are gay and lesbian organizations, from the Girl Scouts to Greenpeace to the Arts, the Gay and Lesbian OutGiving Fund tries to create opportunities for gay and lesbian people to identify that those contributions are coming from the gay community. One of the first ways they are doing this is by building awareness around the contributions the Gill Foundations is making to the general public.

The reasoning is two-fold. First is to help make people aware of the similarities between the gay community and the rest of society, and second, to celebrate our differences. For instance, in Denver, the Gill Foundation made a large donation to the public library system and was awarded a plaque, which hangs in the main library. In doing so, they make everyone who walks into the public library aware that gay and lesbian people care about reading and writing and children's future.

Locally, the Gay and Lesbian OutGiving Fund is underwriting the cost of bringing Elie Weisel, the Nobel Peace Prize winner who survived the Nazi Holocaust and travels the world speaking out against discrimination, hate and oppression, to Colorado Springs on May 7, 1997. Food for Thought Gatherings is organizing the event, and many other organizations have chosen to co-sponsor. Ground Zero is one of these organizations. Visibility, positive visibility is vital to the creation of community and to bring about understanding, according to Pease.

"We emphatically do not want people to stop giving to mainstream organizations," Pease says. "These contributions are far too important and necessary.What we eventually want to do is to be able to bundle contributions together and make one very large donation to a general public organization in the name of the Gay and Lesbian OutGiving Fund. This makes a powerful statement that gays and lesbians are supporting public institutions and that we care about our community, our children and the future of each." Imagine the YMCA receiving a check for $10,000 from the Gay and Lesbian OutGiving Fund, compliments of 100, one-hundred dollar donations from local gays and lesbians.

The Gill Foundation hopes to unroll that project within the next year. A pretty tall order for a three year old organization. To fill that order, the Gill Foundation recently hired three new staff members to help develop and implement that program and manage the growing foundation.

AN EXPANDING FOUNDATION

Brooke Mountain came on in January of this year as office manager to help control the foundation's ever-increasing expansion and aid in the daily operations of the Gill Foundation office. Kelvin McNeill came on board in April as Director of Communications and Community Outreach to develop and execute effective strategies to raise awareness and increase communication around the Gay and Lesbian OutGiving Fund locally. His first, and very successful project was the sponsorship of NPR on KRCC 91.5 FM and a $5,000 matching funds challenge during the last day of KRCC's on the air funding drive, which helped KRCC exceed their fundraising goals. And, while the sponsorship of NPR is wonderful, the fact that every couple minutes Lynn Akers had to say GAY and LESBIAN OutGiving Fund during the matching funds challenge was absolutely delicious.

Erika Shatz joins the Gill Foundation in May. Her main focus will be to help evaluate grant proposals of organizations that the the Gill Foundation funds or will fund to ensure that they are viable and are doing the most amount of good for the community, both the gay and lesbian community and the community at large.

The Gill Foundation recently opened an office in Washington D.C. for the Gay and Lesbian OutGiving Fund, run by Director Mickey MacIntyre and his associate Arden Hoffman. They are currently hiring a second administrative assistant for the Washington office and will begin taking on interns in the near future.

Pease observed, "We're doing all this on one-fifth of Focus on the Family's budget," Pease says. "This is an incredible tribute to all the amazing people involved on the volunteer and professional level within the gay and lesbian community."

And people is what the Gill Foundation is all about. Giving people in organizations the tools to do their job in reaching out to the people in their community, investment in technical assistance to enable people to do their jobs more effectively, educating organizations on the dynamics of organizational development, alocating separate funds for workshops, seminars and classes essential to the growth of the staff and organization and awarding grants for general support are the key elements in the foundation's grant giving.

As far as grant making goes, the Gill Foundation's strategies differ from other philanthropic foundations in that many of these foundations far too often award grants for projects and short-term programs. This leaves the organization without a portion of their funding when a particular project ends. Awarding general support grants, according to Pease, allows the organization to focus on growth, outreach and staff development, rather than on fleeting programs and projects.

And it's not just gay and lesbian organizations that the Gill Foundation funds, though these organizations are the primary emphasis. In 1995, out of the 1.1 million dollars awarded, $730,000 in grants was given to gay and lesbian organizations. The remaining $350,000 was divided among advocacy organizations focused on community involvement and education. Habitat for Humanity, the Denver Public Library Friends Foundation, Jewish Community Center, the Smokebrush Theatre for the Arts, the League of Women Voters, Colorado AIDS Project, KBDI TV Public Television, Denver and Brotherhood of Joy were just a few of the many organizations awarded grants that year.

Celebrants join conga line at Chshire Ball. The idea of the Ball was originally conceived by K. Pease and F. Whitworth in Colorado Springs, who then sold the idea to the Denver Community and Tim Gill as a statewide activity. Four years later, it has become one of the social events of the year and a significant fundraiser for programs of importance to the youth of our state.

In 1996, the Gilll Foundation awarded a grant to the National Holocaust Museum and the Denver presentation of the Nutcracker Ballet, complete with an program insert welcoming everyone to the performance and to enjoy their evening compliments of the Gay andLlesbian OutGiving Fund.

GRANT MAKING MADE EASY

Most organizations that the Gill Foundation funds are grassroots, non-urban, and not a local branch of a national organization.The reason behind this, according to Pease, is that in large urban areas such as San Francisco, Miami, Boston, Atlanta, New York, etc., there is a self-contained and self-perpetuating funding base as gays and lesbians move out of more rural area for the diversity, safety and openness of the urban environment. When they move, they take their money with them, leaving smaller community organizations with a much smaller funding base.

In doing this, they literally isolate local gays and lesbians, and especially gay youth, removing their role models, support systems, funding and decreasing the visibility gays and lesbians, forcing those left behind to struggle harder for equality, or crawl back into the closet.

"That's why the majority of the funding we do is to grassroots, non-urban organizations," Pease says. "But we also fund some national organizations that base in urban areas because a multifacited approach to grant-making benefits a broader spectrum of people. We believe that the work of national groups like NGLTF, Human Rights Campaign, the Victory Fund, etc., wouldn't mean anything without the work of local organizations like Equality Colorado and Ground Zero. And the work of these local organizations is augmented by the work of people at the national level."

Three elements are considered when the Gill Foundation awards a grant: advocacy, education, and civil rights. The organization's history and actions should demonstrate pro-freedom, pro-equality, pro-education and coalition building. These are several of the reasons that the Gill Foundation funds Ground Zero.

"Ground Zero is one our favorite organizations to fund because of their consistent priority to outreach to the entire community," Pease says. "Ground Zero has a very appropriate mix of educating gay and lesbian people about gay and lesbian issues and community issues and making sure that people have a way of tapping into the organization which represents them.. Simultaneously, Ground Zero is able to work with the greater Colorado Springs community. Very few gay and lesbian organizations across the country are able to boast of the kinds of successes that Ground Zero boasts."

In a hostile environment, Ground Zero has effectively built coalitions with various minority and civil rights groups and has developed a certain amount of clout within the political arena. The coalition building, education, visibility work and the community changes resulting from Ground Zero's efforts over the past couple years has made a palatable difference in the Colorado Springs community, a difference that has received national attention, and the Gill foundation proudly funds these efforts, according to Pease.

The Gill Foundation will continue to fund and educate grassroots as well as national organizations. In 1996, their funding base reached 1.7 million dollars and is expected to increase in 1997 as the Outgiving Fund develops. Presently, they are negotiating a substantial grant to the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo.

"As proud as the Gill Foundation is of Ground Zero," says Frank Whitworth, executive director of Ground Zero, "we are doubly proud to be associated and funded by such a conscientous and visionary foundation. The local and national impact they have made for gays and lesbians is phenomenal considering their brief existence."

" The Gill Foundation's energy, vision, involvement and action reflects the hopes and dreams of gay and lesbian people everywhere, and serves as an inspiration and model for other organizations, fledgling and established, to follow and with which to rally to obtain the equality, acceptance and inclusion gays and lesbians dream of, work toward and hopefully, together, will bring to fruition."

From: EqualityCO

Subj: Good News: SB100 advances; SB209 dead

SB100 the Hate Crimes bill to add age, disability and sexual orientation to the state hate crimes law passed the senate floor today on April 17th. 18-16. One yes vote was excused so we expect a 19-16 vote on third reading. This is the first time the Hate Crimes bill has seen a floor vote. It now goes to the House. [where it failed in committee]

Thanks to everyone who has taken action on this bill. The next step is to contact your representatives to urge a yes vote (we have to go to committee first and don't know which committee will hear it.)

SB209 to prevent higher education from giving domestic partner benefits was killed today on the Senate floor.

Thanks to everyone who called and wrote their senators.

Another Gay Savior

April saw the visit of Michael Johnston to Colorado Springs. Michael's story is sad. He is HIV positive and he's positive that he lived a debauching and horrid lifestyle as a gay man that led to his infection. Thus, after contracting the HIV virus, he just walked away from that lifestyle.

His message, that is just another of the long line of reparative therapy/brainwashing ministries, was delivered as he brought his HOPE 97 Campaign to Colorado Springs (at the Marriott Hotel). He appeared for a local anti-gay organization and, as I understand it, stayed at the house of Brother Will Perkins.

Michael claims that he is not selling reparative therapy but pushes "kicking the gay habit." It is his assumption, because he lived this horrid lifestyle as a gay man and was so terribly unhappy, that all gays are immoral, miserable and unhappy. He, like all of his ilk, produces the stereotype for gays and then lumps everyone into it.

Progressive and kindly radio announcer Chuck Baker asked Michael why the meeting wasn't being held in a church. Michael replied that there are "...a bunch of spineless, yellow bellied pastors in Colorado Springs who don't want to deal with this issue [homosexuality]." Surprise me!!

Anyway, about 75 people showed up for Michael's sermon, one third of whom were observers from the likes of PFLAG and

NGLTF DISAPPOINTED AT CALIFORNIA PROPOSITION 209 DECISION

Washington, D.C.—April 10, 1997 The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) joins with other civil rights advocates throughout the country in expressing its dismay and disappointment with yesterday's federal appeals court decision upholding the constitutionality of California's Proposition 209. The decision in the anti-affirmative action initiative by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco, overturns an injunction issued by a federal district court judge which has banned implementation of the ballot measure since its approval in November.

Proposition 209 eliminates affirmative action programs, bars "preferential treatment," and discrimination in public hiring, contracting and education. According to the opinion of one judge speaking about the decision of the federal district judge who issued the injuction, "[A] system which permits one judge to block with the stroke of a pen what 4,736,180 state residents voted to enact as law tests the integrity of our constitutional democracy."

"The decision yesterday by the federal appeals court is disappointing in many respects, said Kerry Lobel, Executive Director of NGLTF. "First, it allows for the implementation of a measure that is clearly meant to turn back the clock on the civil rights of women and people of color. Second, it ignores the reality that ongoing discrimination continues to pose special problems or obstacles to the hiring, promotion and contracting opportunities of women and people of color. Even a majority of the U.S. Supreme Court has embraced race-conscious remedies in the recent Adarand case."

"Also disturbing", according to Lobel, "is that the decision includes gratuitous language attacking affirmative action programs. At least one of the judges has forgotten that the judiciary exists precisely as a check against the will of the majority, if the majority threatens constitutional rights and privileges," she added. "The gay , lesbian, bisexual and trangender community is fully aware of these attacks since they were also used against the U.S. Supreme Court when it threw out Colorado's anti-gay ballot measure," Lobel went on. Helen Gonzales, NGLTF Public Policy Director noted that "this decision is of importance to the gay community because affirmative action policies affect gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people of color. " "Also, so long as there are forces at work in this country trying to dismantle policies geared toward remedying continued discrimination against women and people of color, we cannot expect recognition of the human dignity and civil rights of gays."

Movie Night

May 17 at 8:00 pm

Pride Center, 125 N. Parkside

Donations accepted

Popcorn & Sodas available

Compliments of

The Pikes Peak Gay and Lesbian Community Center

And How Does Your Money Grow?

Tell Ground Zero How You Want Your Money Spent!!!

I want my donation applied to:

- ☐ *Ground Zero News*
- ☐ *Someone You Know*
- ☐ Support of the Pride Center
- ☐ Speaker's Bureau
- ☐ Other Educational Programs (speakers, authors, trainings, issue papers, etc.)
- ☐ Gathered In Faith Together (GIFT) Developing understanding among communities of faith.
- ☐ Support of a full-time office with two staff members to supply live-answer referrals, resources, information, research and media support, instant response and organizational coordination. To be there when we need them.
- ☐ Ground Zero's done a pretty good job so far. You decide where the money gets used.

The Board of Directors and Staff of Ground Zero sincerely appreciate your support!!!

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(For new credit card contributors!)

Authorized signature(s)_____ date_____

My credit card number is:_____ expires _____

We Want To hear From You

Letters to the Editor, special announcements to be published, organization events or stories, news stories, suggestions, viewpoints, etc.

Ground Zero

P.O. Box 1982, Colorado Springs, CO 80901

(719) 635-6086 FAX: 635-6106 email: grndzeroco@aol.com

Do You Want To Expand The PrideCenter Hours??

Hardly a day goes by that someone doesnt say to me:

"It's a Shame the Pride Center isn't open more for public activities.

I agree, but

are you willing to put your money where your mouth is and join a committee called together to do just that--plan Pride Center activities and see to the staffing of open hours in the evenings for socializing.

Join me on Monday, May 5th at 7 p.m. at the Pride Center to discuss the possibility of doing something in time for Summer. If you don't show--it won't go!! It's now or never.

Frank Whitworth

A Community of News

Eight Pages of News and Events of Local interest For You To Pull Out And Save

BGALA Speaks

The Colorado College

by Ladd Bosworth

Ladd Bosworth, President, BGALA Colorado College & GZ Boardmember

One of the benefits of working in a bookstore is that I am easily able to keep up to date on new books in the areas that interest me. About a week ago I was glancing over the GLBT Studies section when I noticed a new book. I picked it up and read the cover. The title was 'Refuge' and a quote on the cover described the book as "the Uncle Tom's Cabin for the issue of gay rights." I thought "wow, I will have to read this." I turned the book over and looked at the back cover. As I read through the description on the back I slowly realized that this book was not something that I wanted to read, but rather propoganda from Colorado For Family Values. I looked at the front cover of the book again thinking that I must have misread the quote. But it still compared this book with Uncle Tom's Cabin. The quote was by Will Perkins. After the initial shock of finding CFV propoganda in the GLBT Studies section, I became intrigued by the plot of this work of fiction.

The book centers around the plight of a fugitive named Vern Yates. His crime is home schooling his children in the traditional Christian values they have always believed in. The book takes place in a future where "the government turns hostile to traditional families" and the 'gay agenda' has made it illegal to mention anything anti-gay and where homophobia is listed as a psychological disorder. Vern takes flight with his son through the Rocky Mountains in search of a place he has been told is a refuge for outlaw Christians. Chasing Vern and his son is a "butch lesbian" named Sonya. Sonya is a deputy with the Colorado State Patrol. Throughout the story she acts as reinforcement and proof of the travesty that has happened to society. Vern is separated from his wife and daughter when he flees the police. His wife and daughter are immediately put under watch and his daughter is soon taken into custody by the state. Their daughter, Heather, is taken to a school to correct the damage which her family has inflicted on her. The courts tell Gail that she is unfit to raise her daughter and that she is being taken away in the interest of her daughter's mental health.

Throughout the book I was amazed at some of the similarities that I could find in the situation the Yates face to the situation that every GLBT person faces every day of our lives. For many years I have felt that it would be very beneficial for our movement to be able to create a situation in which the people who opposed us could live in our shoes for a few days. I never thought that it would be a member of the Religious Political Extreme who accomplished this task. Ironically, Mark Olsen is able to capture the emotion and normalcy that we all feel about our sexuality by depicting the life of a Christian man living in a gay society. This inverse of the current atmosphere of the United States, but especially in Colorado Springs, serves as a very effective way of putting the members of the Religious Right in our shoes. Vern has to flee for his life from authorities who say that he is an outlaw for believing in God. The Yates' church and their place of social gathering are attacked. Heather is taken away from her mother because she is an unfit mother. Do these events sound familiar to anyone else? These are the events we are faced with every single day of our lives.

The book is not without its usual messages toward the gay community. The book is dedicated to the 811,479 Coloradans who, on November 3, 1992, voted for Amendment 2. You have been attacked, maligned, and plain old lied about more than any other group of citizens in my lifetime. I and many others remember what you really voted for fairness, common sense, and the genuine meaning of civil rights. (Hum.) Weren't we the ones attacked? I would agree that the citizens were lied to. I was so confused about the amendment I didn't know which way to vote.

While this book seems to be more propoganda from CFV, it is in fact, one of the best descriptions of gay life today. In this way I would like to commend Mark Olsen. He did what I only dreamed: provided a description of what it feels like to be gay, but in terms the Religious Right can understand. I am not, however suggesting that you go out and buy this book. It is full of blatant jabs into the lifestyle we are all trying so hard to protect. The book was not upsetting, but it was disturbing that something that is so obviously untrue to us, could be accepted by the intended audience of this book. This book has nothing to do with Uncle Tom's Cabin, but rather takes on the theme of 1984 or The Turner Diaries.

Ground Zero News
is seeking more outlets for newspaper pickup. If you have a place or know a place that would be receptive,
Call Frank at 635-6086.
If not your place, get permission before you call!

Interview

Candace Gingrich

by Debbie Eisenstein

When Candace Gingrich passes up a major women's rugby event, you know it's got to be for something important. On April 4, at her widely anticipated first speaking engagement in Colorado Springs at Centennial Hall, she cheerfully noted that "my team, the Washington Furies, is hosting 16-20 women's rugby teams from all across the country for their annual rugby tournament. And I'm here!" She appeared to enjoy herself as much as did the crowd of about 275, relishing in "doing what I love so much: going out to the grassroots level, talking with people, and sharing my story."

C. Gingrich speaks in Colorado Springs

As the major speaker for the Human Rights Campaign's nationwide tour, Gingrich's focus is to remind people that lesbian/gay/bi/transgendered people still don't have equal rights, despite the Supreme Court's overturning of Amendment 2. Most people in the audience were surprised to hear that right now, in 41 states, people can be fired from their jobs for being gay or even for being perceived as gay. In the military, the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy has actually resulted in more witch hunts and discharges on the grounds of homosexuality than before it was enacted. Not to mention that lesbians and gays don't have access to the heterosexual privilege of marriage, which bestows on married couples more than 1000 benefits denied to those not legally married. And religious conservatives continue to try to end educational and support programs for gay youth in schools, despite a disproportionately high rate of gay teen suicide, dropping out of school, and running away from home.

On stage, Candace Gingrich is a passionate and articulate spokesperson for gay rights and human rights. In person she is warm, down-to-earth, and direct.

How do you like Colorado?

I love Colorado. It's very comfortable here, and the people are – kind of like midwest respect and values, but it's in the west!

Colorado Springs has a real conservative reputation and conservative element – how do you view that?

To be honest with you, I don't view it any differently than other places I've gone to that tend to be conservative. There are ignorant people all over the country. Yes, this is the birthplace of Amendment 2, but that birth also gave birth to thousands of activists across the country. It gave birth to the national scene recognizing how ballot initiatives can affect a state.

Do you notice any difference between the gay activism in Colorado Springs as compared to any other similarly conservative town?

Aside from one visit to Orange County when Bob Dornan was still a representative there, I've never really been to "the belly of the beast," as people like to refer to Colorado Springs. The very fact that your organization is called Ground Zero recognizes that this is such a concentrated place

Continued P. 17 See Candace

PAUL MITCHELL AVEDA TIGI NEXXUS
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SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT LAST NIGHT?

Having problems talking with your partner about using condoms?

Can't cope with the fear of AIDS?

Need to know the guidelines for safe sex in the 90's?

Let's talk man to man.

The Southern Colorado AIDS Project has information on all issues that are important to you.

We hold workshops on everything from health and nutrition, to safe sex practices, interfaith workshops, and fitness.

J.U.I.C.E.
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S-CAP 578-9092

S-CAP UPDATE

S-CAP to host open house

The Southern Colorado AIDS Project will be holding an Open House and Reception on Wednesday, May 14 from 5 to 7 p.m. to welcome Terje Anderson, S-CAP's new Executive Director, and to honor the effort and commitment of all involved in S-CAP's work.

Anderson, who began work April 4, moved to Colorado from Vermont, where he did AIDS work- for more than a decade. In addition to his work at S-CAP, Anderson serves as a member of President Clinton s National Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS and as Chair of the AIDS Advisory Committee of HRSA, the federal agency which administers the Ryan White Care Act.

"I've really enjoyed my first few weeks here. I've been very impressed by everyone involved with S-CAP and am looking forward to getting to know more people in the community," said Anderson.

Community members are invited to come and meet Terje and the entire S-CAP staff and Board.

Light refreshments will be served.

The S-CAP offices are located at 514 South Tejon in Colorado Springs.

If possible, R.S.V.P. to 578-9092 on

S-CAP' s Calendar of May Events

All events are held at the Colorado Spring S-CAP office unless otherwise indicated. Readers are highly encouraged to call ahead (578-9092) to confirm meeting dates, times and locations.

May 1, Thursday 5:30 p.m.	Family, Friends and Loved Ones Group
May 1, Thursday 5:30 p.m.	HIV+ Men's Group
May 3, Saturday 7:00 p.m.	Black Tie Dinner featuring Dr. Jocelyn Elders, at the Broadmoor
May 5, Monday 9:30 a.m.	Governor's AIDS Council, Fort Collins
May 5, Monday 12.:15 p.m.	Chiropractic Orientation Session
May 7, Wednesday 12:00 noon	Client Services Potluck
May 8, Thursday 5:30 p.m.	HIV+ Men's Group
May 14, Thursday 5 - 7 p.m.	S-CAP OPEN HOUSE AND RECEPTION
May 15, Thursday	STAFF SEMINAR DAY
May 15, Thursday 5:30 p.m.	Family, Friends and Loved Ones Group
May 15, Thursday 5:30 p.m.	HIV+ Men's Group
May 17, Saturday 10 a.m. - noon	AIDS 101
May 21, Wednesday 12:00 noon	Client Services Potluck
May 22, Thursday 5:30 p.m.	HIV+ Men's Group
May 23, Thursday 8.30 a.m.	Southern Colorado AIDS Consortium Meeting
May 26, Monday HOLIDAY	S-CAP OFFICES CLOSED

Hospice Support

Mark your calendars on Saturday, May 31 to show your support for the Pikes Peak Hospice. The Lotus Eater is going to donate 10% of the entire day's sales to the Pikes Peak Hospice to support the wonderful work it is doing

We all know how much the Pikes Peak Hospice has and is helping our entire community. Now is another chance for you to help continue its work. Come in droves, in vans, and in cars; come by bike or foot. But most of all, come to help.

The Lotus Eater Boutique

311 N. Tejon Street

(Editor's note: ***A good cause. Wouldn't it be wonderful if other businesses would jump on board and do the same thing on May 31st. If you want to, GZN will be out in time to publicize it next month.)***

Just call the Ground Zero Office (635-6086) and let us know.)

The GREAT GIVEAWAY

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GROUND ZERO

is proud to be a sponsor of the Holocaust Commemoration Program on May 7th. featuring Mr. Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Laureate, Author and survivor of internment in the Auschwitz Death Camp.

Tickets are without charge but are expected to be in heavy demand and short supply. We have a limited number of these in the Ground Zero Office (call Frank-635-6086)

Tickets will be available as long as they last to the general public on May 5th-6th from 4-8 p.m. in the Food for Thought offices at 749 E. Pikes Peak (Corner of Prospect).

ELIE WIESEL, NOBEL LAUREATE
1997 Holocaust Commemoration Program
"The Ethics of Memory"

hosted by Food for Thought Gatherings

Wednesday, May 7, 1997 at 8 p.m.

Palmer High School Auditorium

Admission is free, Tickets are required

Food For Thought Gatherings (FFTG), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, brings people together to promote positive communication in our community. FFTG has over 400 participants, more than three dozen "Community Partners" and is coordinated by a Board of Directors representing many segments of our community.

Our goals for this event parallel our goals for the FFTG program. We hope to bring people of different backgrounds together to share an experience that will provoke thought and discussion. Most importantly, we will remember and honor those whose lives and deaths were defined by the Holocaust.

For information about this program and where to get tickets, or other FFTG programs call 634-0005.

Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel has worked on behalf of oppressed people for much of his adult life. His personal experience of the Holocaust led him to use his talents as an author and teacher to defend human rights and peace throughout the world.

Wiesel and his family were deported by the Nazis to Auschwitz when he was 15. His mother and younger sister perished there, his two older sisters survived. Wiesel and his father were later transported to Buchenwald.

Wiesel's efforts have earned him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the U.S. Congressional Medal, the Medal of Liberty Award, more than 75 honorary degrees, and in 1986, the Nobel Peace Prize. His more than 35 books have also won numerous awards.

UNDERWRITTEN BY A GRANT FROM THE GILL FOUNDATION'S GAY & LESBIAN OUTGIVING FUND.
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Without your financial support--none of this would be possible!!

For as little as $25 a year--You can be a part of our future as a community or you could become a sustaining partner.

We Need You
Call Julie at 635-6086

As GROUND ZERO prepares to celebrate its 5th anniversary, we are reminded that our friends at CITIZENS PROJECT are celebrating their 5th. birthday this Spring.

Last month, *GZN* featured CP and its great work on the cover. The one thing we forgot to say: Like GZ, Citizens Project depends on contributions and its membership to survive. Consider being supporting member of both organizations. Call today--(719) 520-9899

COUNSELING SERVICES FOR GAY MEN

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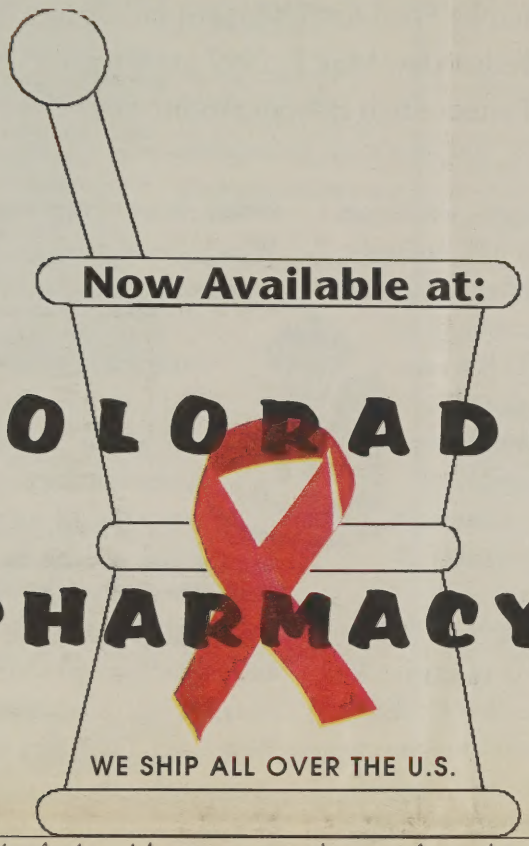

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TELEFUNDRAISER A SUCCESS!!

A warm and heartfelt Thank You to everyone who participated in the Telefundraiser April 4th - 7th!! From everyone who worked on data entry, to wiring the center for the extra phones, to those who gave up their evenings to help us call, *and you all know who you are,*

YOU ARE ALL WONDERFUL AND WE APPRECIATE YOUR TIME AND EFFORTS MORE THAN YOU KNOW!!

A very special thank you to Susan Swern, board member and fundraiser extraodinaire, who put in countless hours of work to make this event the success it was. Thank you, Susan!

FYI

Including the Gill Foundation match for contributions over $250.00 and sustaining monthly members we received just over $26,000 in pledges!!!!

66 member renewed their annual pledges at an increased amount.

47 new member were signed up

64 agreed to either continue monthly donations or begin their monthly sustaining membership (these are matched by Gill!)

5 agreed to donate at the $250 level! (these will also be matched by Gill!)

...and a special thank you to each and every one of you!

So, when you get your pledge card, if you haven't received it already, please fill out the information and return it with:

your check as soon as you can so Ground Zero can have those funds matched!!

(And if you feel like you could add a couple extra bucks to that pledge, we'd be ever so grateful!)

Julie Cooper, associate director

Ground Zero Press Release

A fundamental American value holds that people who do their jobs, pay their taxes and contribute to their communities should not be singled out to lose their jobs based solely on unfair discrimination. It is a value in which millions trust and find comfort for their personal and job security.

Yet, millions of hard working citizens face the fear and degradation of termination from their jobs because federal law does not extend this basic fairness to these millions of citizens who happen to be gay or lesbian.

Daily, lesbian and gay people are fired from their jobs, refused work, paid less than their comparable coworkers, suffer harassment, violence and sometimes even death, and yet there is no law to which they can turn to protect their basic rights.

In 41 of our 50 states it is legal to fire a person simply because they are gay or lesbian, regardless of past job performance, regardless of seniority, regardless. Colorado is one of those states.

This injustice is all too often silent, a silence that breeds intolerance and affirms discrimination. The Human Rights Campaign, a national organization that promotes equality, sought to break the silence and raise public awareness of this injustice by airing a commercial that directly addresses job discrimination during the "Coming Out" episode of "Ellen" on April 30th.

"Shoes," as the ad has been called, dramatizes the plight of a woman who has just been fired from her job because of her sexual orientation. A conversation between her coworkers reveals that the firing, while unfair, is perfectly legal - a fact that, like most Americans, one of her colleagues is shocked to learn. The ad offers a toll-free number for the Human Rights Campaign that viewers can call to obtain more information.

"ELLEN's" network, ABC, refused to air the ad on its national market. Of the 45 affiliates HRC approached to air "Shoes," 33 have agreed.

ABC's local affiliate KRDO,channel 13, has refused to air "Shoes," a decision that adheres to KRDO's embarrassing history, both on and off the air, of denying equal and fair treatment to minorities and especially to lesbians and gays. Calls to KRDO by Ground Zero and members of the media requesting reasons behind the refusal to air the commercial have gone unanswered.

Frankly, this doesn't surprise us. During the heat of the Amendment 2 controversy, KRDO distributed a memo throughout the station stating that in all stories, Amendment 2 shall be referred to as the law that denies special rights to homosexuals. KRDO's license is presently under review for discrimination in hiring of minorities and for, among other things, unfair treatment of minority employees.

Ground Zero's concern over the past four and a half years has been fairness, equality and raised awareness of the plight of all marginalized people, especially gays and lesbians. We believe that most people are fair-minded and equally concerned with discrimination and the unfair treatment of their fellow citizens.

Yet, under the vague and narrow guise of such buzz words as "Family Values" and "Protect our Children," the majority of Americans continue to be denied the information and role models that would help reduce discrimination, consciously promoted by the lies and exaggerations of the few that seek to polarize and create a second-class citizenry of those whom they choose to marginalize.

KRDO's history identifies them with the polarizing forces, their silence confirms it.

LESBIAN LOOKS ON

Continued from P. 2

HIT! Why me? Am I one of God's bad jokes? A backfire or freak of nature? How could I have been born with the shell of a man when I know inside, in my heart, that I'm really a woman?

I want to open my window and scream, " I'm a woman and I'm not going to take it anymore!"

But the window stays closed, the drapes stay drawn. I curl up in bed and cry myself to sleep, again.

As we all watch Ellen Morgan and Ellen Degeneres come out of the closet this week, let's all try to come out of our closets of ignorance and try to understand those who are different a little better. If we can't accept the diversity of our own GLBT community, how can ever expect the rest of the world to accept us?

A MESSAGE FROM REV. NORI ROST Pastor The Pikes Peak Metropolitan Community

"But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and God's grace toward me has not been in vain."
I Corinthians 15:10

I remember sneaking into a movie theatre in Merced, California when the movie "Personal Best" was first released. I was in the Air Force at the time and didn't want to be caught in a movie that might cast doubt on my presumed heterosexuality.

As I sat in the darkened theatre watching the movie unfold I could only think, "This is about people like me. I'm not alone."

The story line was radically different than my own coming out story and the ending certainly left a lot to be desired. It followed the prescribed formula of lesbian novels written in the 50's: at least one woman would come to her senses and "go straight" while the other nobly determined to live her life of struggle alone.

Still it was an important movie in that it showed for the first time in my life a quasi-positive take on being gay or lesbian. In a world filled with heterosexual characters in everything from advertising to comic strips to movies to television, it was so refreshing to see someone that I could relate to on the silver screen.

I thought about that when I was contacted recently by a local television station. They wanted to get my reaction to Jerry Falwell's campaign to have advertisers boycott the coming out episode on "Ellen" scheduled to be aired April 30.

I said I wasn't surprised Falwell would take such a tactic--bullying as always been part of his M.O.--but I also expressed dismay that after all these years he and others would still feel so compelled to try to control the country for their own agenda.

Who knows how many lives have been damaged--some perhaps irrevocably--by their continued hate-filled, myth-fueled war against the g/l/b/t community? Who knows how many young g/l/b/t teens have been driven to despair, destructive behavior and even death by their inability to become what society says they should, what their churches say they must?

If I had seen Ellen's coming out episode when I was 16 it wouldn't have made me a lesbian--but it sure would have made my coming out easier and less destructive. Perhaps it would have also prepared my family for it as well so that when I disclosed my orientation I would have found love and acceptance instead of being kicked out of the family home and judged. Perhaps my best friend who is heterosexual would have still chosen me to be a part of her wedding rather than completely shutting me out--fearful of what others would think of her if she had an avowed lesbian as a bridesmaid.

Instead, I had only the heterosexual models silently shouting "If you're not like us you're not OK."

By the grace of God I survived my turbulent coming years and am now at peace with who I am and who I love. If I could change my orientation, I wouldn't. I am that much at peace with who I am.

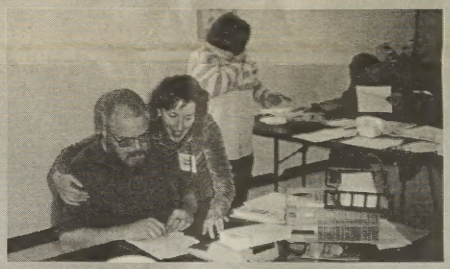
Wouldn't it be great if the men and women and teens coming out at this time will reach that point of self-acceptance a lot faster due to the courage of a television comedian who pushed for a leading lesbian character and the network and local stations who will air this show?

I told the reporter who interviewed me--"The worst that will happen when this episode airs is that some people will become more tolerant of the g/l/b/t community. The best that will happen is that a young person just coming out will find hope and a sense of belonging." Either way it's a win-win situation. May God bless you this month.

A Picture Perfect Community

Straight or Gay

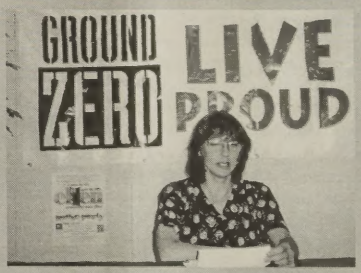
There are a lot of great people in Colorado Springs



Lan & Susan go over receipts of GZ telefundraiser (front) while Julie & Kristen continue calling (back)

Frank Whitworth talks to Freethinkers about Extremists

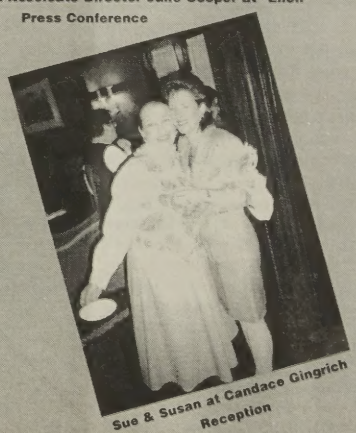
GZ's Executive Director Frank Whitworth and S-CAP's new Executive Director Terje Anderson get acquainted over lunch at the Colorado Grill



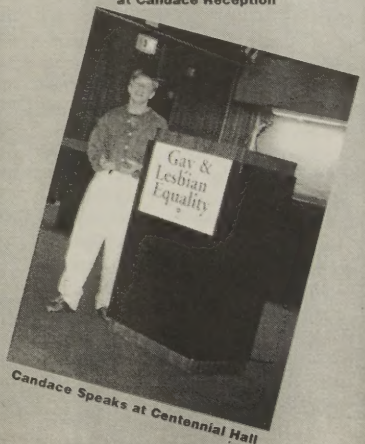
GZ Assoicate Director Julie Cooper at "Ellen" Press Conference

Sharon and Ellene Party Down at Candace Reception

GZ. Pres. Frank M. and VP Chuck S (right) talk with HRC Representatives traveling with Candace Gingrich



Sue & Susan at Candace Gingrich Reception



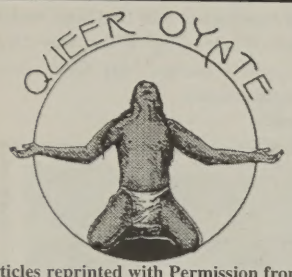
Candace Speaks at Centennial Hall

News From La Gente Unida

of concern to Latina Lesbians and Latino Gays

(Editor's note: La Gente Unida in Denver has consented to allow *GZN* to reprint news from their newsletter and other information. We would like to have someone in Southern Colorado to report on area specific news/perhaps a bilingual column. Any takers??? Call Frank at 635-6086)

We missed connections on a La Gente article this month but will be back on schedule next month. Meanwhile, if you have questions or need support, we encourage you to contact La Gente by writing them at P.O. Box 11714, Denver, CO 80211 or calling (303) 831-6086



Articles reprinted with Permission from A TALKING LEAF Newsletter of the Two-Spirit Native American Coalition of POCAAN*

COMING OUT QUEER NATIVE STORIES

Coming out to myself truly did not happen. I have always been gay, even as a child, and never questioned the process that felt natural. Problems questioned the process that felt natural. Problems developed as I began to love myself as Queer, since labels come with histories, prejudgments, packaged emotions and defined behavior. In my teens, I realized the Queers that were maliciously identified by kids and adults (including my parents) were accused of the same characteristics I felt in myself, and I began to understand that I was connected to this group of hated people. At the same time, I realized I did not have to be the person I was told Queer had to be; I had a goal that I was to spend my life with someone that I could love more than any other person in my life, and this person was to be a man.

Coming out to my family was the end of my life, and the beginning of living as a new person. Being half Native American and half White, I had two cultures to confront. My maternal family, of Cherokee blood, had been Christianized during my Grandmother's time and the family embraced the Bible as the word of God. In 1980, at the age of eighteen, I disclosed my sexuality to my uncle, a Medicine Man who made his living as a psychiatrist. He became very violent; he declared me mentally diseased and in need of help, but beyond any help he could give. I was ordered to leave his house immediately, and leave town that day. I went to see my mother who had already talked with my uncle, and she would not see me in her house; I had to meet her on a deserted road. She demanded that I commit myself to a psychiatric facility; I was an abominable sinner, an abhorrence of nature, and needed tremendous help. This all happened in North Carolina. I was dreadfully afraid, but I knew I had done nothing wrong. I had lived with the Christian hatred all my life, but I was convinced that God had not created me to love men as perverted example for the world to pity and scorn. I had a purpose which I could not divine; I had faith that one day I would know all the answers to the questions that confused me.

I drove to Arkansas during the night to make a home with my father, if he would have me. As I was driving, I had no idea what to expect from this person I hardly knew, this White, middle-class, stern and cold man. When I arrived at his house, his wife met me at the door, concerned but very kind (she never learned what happened). She took me to my father's room where he read every night in solitude; she left us, and I waited several minutes for my father to speak; he was reading. Finally, he acknowledged my presence with a formal greeting. He then told me that my mother had called to tell him that I had declared myself a homosexual. He asked me if this was true. I answered that I know that I was Gay, that I wanted to be open and honest with him. He sat for several minutes, reading the journal, and finally said, "Son, I don't care what you do, as long as you are willing to pay the price."

My father saved my life with this one sentence. I had a home until I could recover from the trauma of losing my maternal family; even if it were emotionless, it was kind, gentle and unobtrusive.

Today, my father has honored and respected me. When I had a partner for almost five years, he treated John like a son-in-law. When John and I separated, Dad cried a bit and said, "Son, you had the only marriage that was working in this family." My mother tells me she has opened her mind, and accepts me for the person I am, but during my latest conversation with her, she said, "My son, when you get AIDS, come home and let me take care of you." I am HIV negative, and she knows this. She will never understand, and she will never know that three of the four boys she brought into the world are Gay; they will never share with her the most important moments of their lives.

I have made tremendous discoveries about homosexuality in Native American societies before the introduction of Western culture. I now understand the important roles and functions of the two-spirited people who had purpose in a culture where people of diverse abilities were looked upon as natural manifestations, not demonic perversions. I have written one paper about the destruction of the Native American culture by Western infiltration, in the form of religious misapplication of Christian teachings, and am preparing to write another. I sent these discoveries to my mother to share with the family. Perhaps, one day, the family will understand the past, and bring the wisdom of our ancestors to live with the present, identified in order to protect the future.

-- Neal Graves

NOTE: The Two-Spirited Spiritual Gathering has been confirmed for June 16-27 at Gold Lake Wilderness Area in Gold Lake, CO. On June 21st there will be a Solstice Celebration. Other activities included at the spiritual encampment include ceremonies, sweats, and hamblecha sites. Attendees are asked to bring camping gear and warm clothing for the evening. Please send David your $10 registration fee.

*1200 S. Jackson, Suite 25, Seattle WA 98144

Transgender Connection

by Carrie Urban
A Selection of Current News, Stories, Information, Local, National, and International
INTRODUCTION

Transgender Connection presents and discusses selected news, stories, and information, about the transgender community. If you think some matter is particularly important right now, call Ground Zero, ask for Julie, and let her know.

Carrie Urban runs a popular gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community bulletin board, "Celestial Light BBS", 719-475-0983, 300-28.8K baud, operates across four echomail networks nationwide.

Personal Note..

It's transgender convention time again. I'll be at California Unity/Dreamin', as an IFGE member, in Long Beach, CA. This time, in a unique setting, I'll be aboard the Queen Mary. My genetic female cousin will be there, as well. Thanks, dear!! I'll be travelling the transgender way, in cool, springlike, California!!

More Travel Tips..

Regardless of what kind of transgender you are as a male, if you plan to travel dressed, the following tips, some of which I gleaned from transgender sources, do apply:

1) Don't overdress - You'll stand out unduly from a crowd of women.

2) Don't underdress - You'll draw unwanted sexual attention from men.

3) Use makeup sparingly - Unless you're doing a drag show, see tip #1.

4) Be honest - I haven't seen this mentioned much, but it makes things easier, generally, and when it's essential, gets you out of many jams not possible otherwise (if you have to be a bit self effacing, do it)

5) Confront discrimination politely, but be prepared to fight - Another seldom mentioned thing, but when I've encountered the same, I've encountered much more ignorance than bigotry. They look alike, but they're not. Educate, first. Tolerance, at least, acceptance, if you can. Never assume the other person is a bigot. If all else fails, you know it's time to fight.

If you know of any tips for transgender females, fax them to Carrie Urban, c/o Ground Zero, 635-6106. Julie will get them to me for the next column.

California Bar Association Committee Votes for Transgender Inclusion

Credit: Melinda and the TCF News in the TCF Forum on America Online

"Wouldn't you know it—the last monthly meeting of the Committee on Gay and Lesbian Concerns of the Santa Clara County Bar Association (4000+ members) voted for T inclusion, and I missed it!!....It is heart warming that somehow people often just do the right thing. I hadn't even asked for T inclusion and am the only T member of the committee. So there you go. I hope this helps to mend some of the perceived rift between the gay, lesbian, bisexual and T communities—a dissonance that I have never experienced, by the way.

We have also introduced a resolution to the greater SCCBA regarding gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender non-discrimination in the legal community. The State Bar of California just passed such a resolution for gay/lesbian discrimination, but bisexual and transgender were omitted. I have applied for membership on the state committee with an eye toward rectifying this. Love to all, Melinda"

Discussion: This is some hopeful news for those involved in legal circles. Who would've thought this was possible?? You might connect "bar association," as I did, with "stodgy." If you're involved in the legal profession, get involved educating your peers on transgender concerns in the field.

Intersex Video Available That Discusses Intersexuality and Life

Credit: Intersex Society of North America (ISNA) /TCF News on AOL

"ISNA has produced a thirty minute video in which eight intersexuals simply discuss their lives and their opinions about more humane treatment of intersexuality. The video is of amateur quality, but the speakers are eloquent and articulate. Send a $30 donation to ISNA with a request for a copy. ISNA, P.O. Box 31791, San Francisco, CA, 94131. Cheryl Chase, Intersex Society of North America"

Discussion: In keeping with the diverse spirit of this column, I figured it was time to begin covering, now and then, a story or two about intersexuality. I've seen numerous stories about, for example, people born with ambiguous genitalia. Then there's the man who lost a penis, was raised as a girl, and is transforming back to a man now. Both of these examples raise all sorts of new questions. A good place to start, especially, for those dealing with this issue, personally, is an objective source. You'll see more intersex coverage in future columns.

Yours,

Carrie

MAY 1997

Send your listings to GZ CALENDAR, P. O. Box 1982
COS CO 80901 FAX: (719) 635-6106 V (719) 635-6086

Please, Make Submissions by the 17th in February

Perhaps someday, just maybe, I will replace my old computer with one that can do the job. It's press deadline and I can't get the Calendar of Events to print. I am experiencing a deja vu of the March debacle and can find no way to include the calendar of events in this month's issue. Once again, I have prevailed on the mercy of the Pikes Peak Gay and Lesbian Community Center to print their Standard Calendar and, hopefully, will be able to get my computer to perform in some sane manner next month. Frank Whitworth

Regularly Scheduled

Sun:
-Pueblo MCC, 5:00 p.m. (543-6466)
-MCC Service at All Souls Unitarian, 5:00 p.m.
-Dignity Brunch - 2nd Sunday, Colorado Grill, 11:30 a.m.
-**PPGLCC Bowling**, Bear Creek Lanes, 7:00 p.m., 260-5987

Mon:
-Gay AA, 471-4GAY

Tue:
-MCC Fellowship Live Care Group, 7:00 p.m., 473-1628
-Transgendered Support Group, 471-4GAY

Wed:
-**Inside-Out Youth Group**, McMaster Clinic, Basement of El Paso County Health Department, 301 South Union Blvd., 5:30 p.m. Recreation at Pride Center, 7:30 p.m., 578-3160
-***This Way Out***, KRCC, 91.5 FM, 6:30 p.m., sponsored by PPGLCC
-MCC Fellowship Live Care Group, 7:00 p.m., 597-4997
-PFlag Meetings - 2nd Wed., 6:00 p.m., 575-8666
-PPGLCC Executive Committee - 1st Wed., Pride Center 7:30 p.m.
-**PPGLCC Board Meetings** - 3rd Wed., Pride Center, 7:30 p.m.
-50 cent draft night, True Colors
-All you can drink night, Hide & Seek

Thu:
-Bingo, **PPGLCC Fundraiser**, Bingo Palace, 117 E. Las Vegas 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., Volunteers Needed, 687-6335
-MCC Fellowship Live Care Group, Daytime, 471-4422
-CGRA - 1st & 3rd Thursdays, Branding Iron, 7:00 p.m.
-Country Night, True Colors

Fri:
-Gay AA, 471-4GAY
-Karaoke, True Colors, 8:00 - 11:00 p.m.

Sat:
-Adopt-A-Highway-2nd Sat., Highway 24 near Cascade, 471-4GAY
-Dignity Mass - 1st & 3rd Sat., Sacred Heart, 7:00 p.m.
-Women's Social Group (formerly FLO)- 1st & 3rd Sat., 471-4GAY

Resource Guide

ANTI- VIOLENCE PROJECT (AVP)
(719) 338-8899
A 24-hour confidential crisis hotline. If you are a victim of verbal harassment, physical violence, discrimination, domestic violence/partner abuse, sexual assault, etc., call the AVP.

CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE
444-5896

CITIZENS PROJECT
P.O. Box 2085 COS CO 80901 (719) 520-9899
Monitoring religious right activities with emphasis on the maintenance of the separation of church and state

COLO. GAY RODEO ASSOCIATION (CGRA)
P. O. Box 15504 COS CO 80935 (719) 576-CGRA

CYBER BBS
A computer Board serving the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Community.Colorado Springs: (719) 385-0111 or Denver: (303) 595-0111 or help and free windows software.

DAVIDS
2125 E Fountain Blvd Colo Spngs CO 444-0400
Where everyone is welcome to Meet, Drink, Eat, Talk, Play, Dance, Relax, and just be Themselves.

DIGNITY
P.O. Box 1172 COS CO 80901 (719) 635-5773
An organization of glbt Catholics, their families and friends. ACTIVITIES: Mass for the glbt and heterosexual communities is held the 1st & 3rd Saturdays at 7 p.m., Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 21st & W. Colo. Ave. in Colo. Springs. A monthly fundraising brunch is held on the 2nd Sunday, 11:30 a.m., at the Colorado Grill Restaurant, 512 W. Colorado Avenue.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION
(719) 633-3819 (800) 500-1119

EL PASO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT ....STD CLINIC 578-3148
.....DRUG & ALCOHOL TREATMENT PROGRAM
578-3150

*** EVANGELICALS CONCERNED RESOURCE CENTER**
P. O. BOX 62466 COS CO 80962
A resource for materials involving Christianity and the Gay and Lesbian Community

GENDER IDENTITY CENTER (Denver)
1455 Ammons St #100 Lakewood CO 80001 (303) 202-6466
Transgender Outreach & Education
Local Information Contact: Lisa Jo...591-5860

*** GROUND ZERO INC (GZ)**
P. O. Box 1982 COS CO 80901 email grndzeroco@aol.com
V (719) 635-6086 F (719) 635-6106
Ground Zero maintains a full-time office relocated in the new gay center (125 N. Parkside.) See our mission statement on P 2.

HIDE AND SEEK (H&S)
505 W. Colorado Ave. COS CO 80903
(719) 634-9303
The largest & oldest Complex, with 4 bars: a large show and dance .bar, a quiet pool room bar, a country bar and a leather/levy bar. In addition, there is a separate restaurant.

***INSIDE/OUT YOUTH SUPPORT GROUP**
An adolescent support group for those questioning their sexuality. Weekly meetings and activities. Call 578-3160 for more information.

LA GENTE UNIDA
P.O. Box 11714, Denver, CO 80211 (303) 831-6086
La Gente Unida is dedicated to serving the needs of the Gay Latino and Latina Community

NATIONAL AIDS HOTLINE
ENGLISH (800) 342-AIDS SPANISH (800) 344-SIDA
TTY (800) 243-8922S

N.O.W. EL PASO COUNTY
570-1163

NATIONAL RUNAWAY SWITCHBOARD
(800) 342-2437

NATIONAL YOUTH CRISIS LINE
(800) 448-4663

*** NEW PHAZES (NP)**
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Keep informed on local/world news, entertainment and upcoming events. Call for your subscription today, (719) 634-0236, and turn your "old phaze" into a new one.Your only Lesbian Newsletter

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Pueblo, CO 81003 (719) 583-4311
Funded under the auspices of the Pueblo's County Health Department.

P-FLAG COS CO
P.O. BOX 10076 COS CO 80932 VM (719) 575-8658

P-FLAG PUEBLO
P. O. BOX 4484 Pueblo CO 81003 (719) 545-7426
Support groups for family and friends of lesbians and gays, dedicated to the preservation of families in loving relationships.

*** PIKES PEAK GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY CENTER (PPGLCC)**
Helpline 471-4GAY VM email PPGLCC2@aol.com
P. O. Box 607 COS CO 80901 719) 471-4429

PIKES PEAK *JUSTICE AND PEACE* COMMISSION
235 E Fountain Blvd COS CO 80903 (719) 632-6189

*** PIKES PEAK METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH (MCC)**
730 N. Tejon St COS CO 80903 (719) 634-3771
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PROOF
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Bisexual Support Group for Southern Colorado

PUEBLO AFTER 2
P. O. Box 1602 Pueblo CO 81002, (719) 564-4004
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RAINBOW WAGON
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SIMPLE JUSTICE
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A social support organization

SOUTHERN COLO. AIDS PROJECT(S-CAP)
514 S. Tejon St. COS CO 80903 V (719) 578-9092

SUICIDE PREVENTION HOT LINE
(719) 596-5433

TRUE COLORS (TC'S)
1865 N. Academy Blvd. COS CO 80909
(719) 637-0773
Serving the entire GLBT community, the doors are open to everyone. There is a dance floor, pool tables, games, and drink specials Open W-S.

*** UNITED COURT OF THE PIKES PEAK EMPIRE (UCPPE)**
P. O. Box 6925 COS CO 80904,
(719) 447-1092

WOMENS SOCIAL GROUP (WSG)
For info, call (719) 471-4GAY
A social activities organization for women supported by PPGLCC. Meet 1st/3rd Saturdays.

YOUTH STREET WORKS PROGRAM
(800) 246-4646
GLBT Youth Drug/Suicide/Runaway--Referral/Counseling

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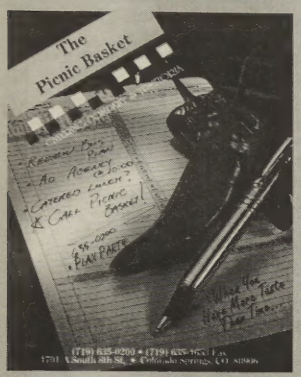
POOR RICHARDS

THE HIDE AND SEEK COMPLEX



Little Richard's

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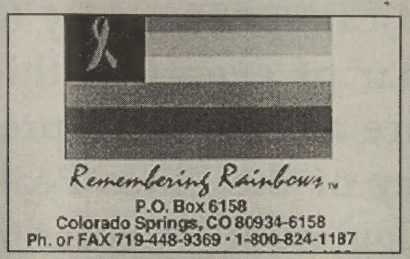
BodyWorks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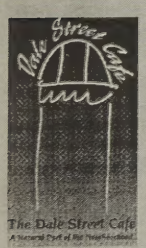
Skyway Video



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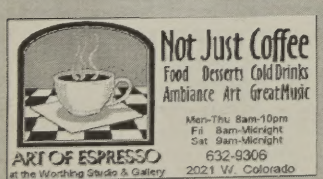
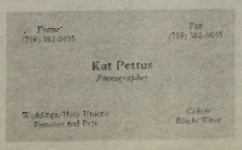
All Soul's Unitarian Church

Compleat Gamer

Phantom Canyon



Kimball's theatre



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Freedom Writer

A HARD LOOK AT THE HARD RIGHT

Ashcroft aids religious groups

Washington, DC--During the last days of the 104th (1996) Congress, the most committed right wing fundamentalist, John Ashcroft of Missouri, in a sneaky maneuver unworthy of any genuinely religious person, attached an amendment to the welfare act which was intended to gut the First Amendment's Establishment Clause. President Clinton signed it into law.

Ashcroft's amendment, known as "a charitable choice" provision permits government social services to be administered inside a church or house of worship; grants a right to religious contractors to display any kind of religious symbols where government funded services are provided, and allows religious contractors to discriminate in hiring employees, who are paid with taxpayer funds. It also grants all religious organizations a statutory right to be eligible to contract with a state to administer social services. This right can be enforced with a lawsuit against the state. Furthermore, this federal legislation prevents states from requiring that religious social service providers deliver services in an environment free from proselyting symbols and expressions.

These provisions will allow religious organizations to require that employees paid with taxpayer dollars adhere to the "religious tenets and teachings" of the religious institutions. The legislation also mandates that employees follow rules regarding off-the-job behavior, including consumption of alcoholic beverages.

In other words, this amendment will not only exclude non-believers from government-funded employment, but will also allow groups to advance religious doctrines with taxpayer money.

(From Facts for Action, edited by John Swomley)

RADICAL RIGHT UPDATE

Holy Cow

Canton, Mississippi--In preparation for the end of the age and the return of Jesus, a Pentecostal preacher has prepared the ultimate sacrifice--a holy cow to be slain on the altar of the third Temple in Jerusalem. Clyde Lott, a minister in the Assemblies of jesus Christ, bred a red heifer according to the Jewish interpretation of the Book of Numbers.

Lott, like many conservative christians, believes that a third Temple must be built in Jerusalem before Jesus can return. The last Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus 70 C.E. Ever since, prophecy buffs have eagerly awaited the construction of a new temple. The 1967 takeover of East Jerusalem by israel offered encouragement. But, even before the Temple is built, some maintain, the ashes of a sacrificed red heifer must be used to cleanse the temple site.

Lott contacted Rabbi Chaim Richman, affiliated with the Temple Institute in Jerusalem. Richman flew to Mississippi to inspect the heifer named Dixie, and said it met the biblical requirements. However, Dixie is now beyond the age for sacrificial animals, but her offspring would be suitable. Many Christians believe that the rebuilding of the temple and associated events, will trigger a Third World War called Armageddon, and ultimately the return of Jesus. These zealots attempt to manipulate political events in order to bring about the fulfillment of biblical prophecies.

"The is God's project," Lott told *Charisma* magazine. "We want to keep it out of man's hands. We're just trying to walk a line of faith."

Rev. Lott admits his red heifer project has a secondary purpose, to make money. Over the next three to seven years he plans to ship thousands of red heifers to Israel. His $100 million project has been in the works for eight years.

Save the commandments

Montgomery, Alabama-Conservative Christians are using the actions of a local judge to further their goal of a "Christian nation." Judge Roy Moore's refusal to eliminate Christian prayers and the Ten Commandments from his courtroom has received national attention since his practices were banned as unconstitutional by a higher state court. After Moore was ordered to remove a plaque of the Ten Commandments from his courtroom wall, Alabama's governor, Fob James, said he would use the National Guard and state police to prevent their removal.

In response, the American Family Association sponsored a "Save the Commandments Rally" on Saturday, April 12th at the steps of the State Capitol. "We will be joining Governor Fob James in his support of Judge Moore's right to display the Ten Commandments on the wall of his courtroom and begin each session with a prayer," said Tom Blackerby, who heads the AFA of Alabama.

"The ACLU," Blackerby said, "and other enemies of God in this country, want to remove all mention of God from the public arena. If we allow them to succeed in their efforts, their next assault will be the mention of God in our own churches--which is their ultimate goal--but I would like to remind them that this nation enjoys more freedoms than any nation in history, and this is because we are a Christian nation."

Among some of the groups joining the AFA rally are the Alabama Family Alliance (an affiliate of Focus on the Family), Eagle forum, Christian Coalition, Concerned Women for America, American Center for Law and Justice, Rutherford Institute, as well as dozens of churches.

Christian alternative to AARP

Washington, DC--Offering a "Christian alternative" to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the Christian Association of PrimeTimers (CAP) hopes to counter the alleged liberal political agenda of its well-established rival group.

CAP, like AARP, offers homeowner's insurance, a pharmacy service, travel services, and a number of other benefits. however, their main intent appears to be political. "CAP is mobilizing America's PrimeTimers to ensure moral leadership in government and moral policies for our nation," according to the group's literature.

Dr. Billy A. Melvin, the group's chairman, said CAP will "show America's political leaders that there are millions of Christian Americans who do not share AARP's liberal political agenda for America. We are a Christian organization working to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and return our great nation to righteousness."

Founded three years ago, CAP, with 55,000 members, faces a David and Goliath situation against AARP's 32 million members. Until recently, membership has grown strictly by word of mouth. Now, using direct mail, CAP hopes to garner one million members by the end of 1997.

***Ground Zero News* is pleased to continue publishing selected articles from the *Freedom Writer*, from the Institute for First Amendment Studies, P. O. Box 589, Great Barrington, MA 01230, Telephone: (413) 528-3800**

e-mail: IFAS@BERKSHIRE.NET.

Queer's Eye View Cont from P. 2

at least for me, anyone that Isaac could support would have one strike against them in getting my support. I resent his last minute effort to extend his control and power by determining the election of his successor but can't fault Marylou for capitalizing on it.

So, Marylou won and, I must say, the people of Colorado Springs won. The defeat of Gillaspie was a definite plus. My surprise that Maylou t does not take away from the fact that she is qualified and willing seek to serve and listen to all of the people of Colorado Springs, and that she will lead the city away from its narrowness in the past to a more open and tolerant approach to governing.e

The truth is, I couldn't lose in the choice betwen Marylou and John. I could have lived with each of them and, indeed, the one who won is closer to my first choice than the other and would have received my support had not other considerations come into play. While my ego suffered a perhaps well-deserved slap in the political astuteness department, I am happy with the results.

It would have been nice to have been on the winning side and see a Mayor walk into office partially because of my support. It didn't happen. I would like to congratulate in advance Mayor Makepeace and wish her the very best. She really deserves the office and will do a good job.I would also like to congratulate Marion Stone of the Pikes Peak Gay and Lesbian Community. She supported Makepeace, a choice that turned out to be the right one.

And finally, and you know I always have a finally, like many of you, I have long had problems with Hazlehurst's propensity for waffling and changing views and approaches to suit the direction of the blowing wind. I must say that I got to know him a little better during the campaign and find that I understand and like him more than before. If there is a lesson he could take from this, it would be the old adage that says, when you try to please all of the people all of the time, you end up pleasing few of them. John, you need to go beyond just doing what you have to do to get elected. It will sometimes get you elected but the "sleaze factor" will usually catch up with you in the end--and that is what happened in this election. You need to do what is right, standing with your friends and would-be supporters. Therein lies ultimate strength and voter loyalty.

Now, it's the morning after the election and I have the advantage of hindsight--but it looks as though my thoughts of yesterday have proven correct. What is amazing is the margin of the Makepeace victory--one that surprised almost everyone. It also proves that John's early support was indeed very tenuous and in an amazingly short period of time, from the week before the election, he suffered an unbelievable loss of support. When this was added to the former mayor's endorsement, that seemed to propel a very large undecided vote (30%) into the Makepeace column, and we had the classic landslide.

It's not the first time I have been in the wrong corner but I will say it was one of the worst. I have never seen corners change so fast. It also teaches me a lesson. Go with your first choice--not the convenient or opportunistic one.

Of more concern to me is the character of the new council. In the election of Rivera and Barley, we have a continuation of business as usual on City Council--a Council that has always been overwhelming probusiness and develoment and that has little concern for the people except as they serve that end. Hubert can be expected to fill the post of extremist-in-residence vacated by Gillaspie. All three are prime examples of how beaucoup bucks can buy you most anything in Colorado Springs. The makeup of the council, despite a shift of leadership in the election of Makepeace, is not good.

The defeat of Zelna Joseph was particularly hard to swallow. Zelna went on Council by appointment and has, since, done a very good job, working deligently to fill the position and serve all the people. She was outspent 4 to 1 and much of the vote has to be viewed as racist. Were she white, despite the fact that she was outspent, she would probably have won in this three way race that saw a strong run by a third candidate who had little else than a pro-gun stance.

The best news of the day--that Cheryl Gillaspie was able to garner only 15,000 votes in a 55 thousand vote turnout, demonstrates the smallness of the hard vote of the far right in Colorado Springs and how they can be defeated if the rest of us just vote----intelligently..

The further passage of all five initiatives, including TOPS, proves that the people of Colorado Springs are moving to more thought and less reaction, more concern and less emotion driven ideology, in making decisions of importance to the city. This is good and the passageof TOPS was especially sweet. I also look forward to infrastructure improvement and the first trolley run. Results on these initiatives go a long way in the very desireable "De-Brucing" of our City.

Good Luck Marylou. Your job is cut out for you with the makeup of Council. Somehow, I believe that you can do it.

"Oh, give us a home...where we gayly can roam...and the skies are not cloudy all day".

λ

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MEDIAALERT

MEDIACTION MEDIA ADVISORY

CRUISING THE AIRWAVES

Despite its support for "Ellen's" coming out, ABC has refused to air an ad for a lesbian owned-and-operated company, Olivia Cruises and Resorts. The travel service had hoped to broadcast a 15-second commercial during "Ellen's" much-touted April 30 episode, but their spot was flatly rejected by the network.

According to several press accounts, Olivia's commercial: "features a woman standing on the deck of an ocean liner looking out over the water; when she hears a noise, she turns to find a shadowy figure wearing a baseball cap coming toward her. She is happy to see what appears to be her lover, who then takes off the cap, revealing herself as a woman. They embrace."

TED Inc., the public relations firm representing Olivia, had sent an outline of the ad to ABC and was told on April 4 that lesbian commercials were not acceptable. In defending the network's decision, ABC broadcast editor Bob Reynolds explained: "It is our position that discussion about same-sex lifestyles is more appropriate in programming." "We have a blanket policy against advocacy ads of any kind," added ABC spokesperson Susan Sewell.

"Olivia wants to advertise because they know a large number of lesbian and gay people will be watching this show," objected Ted Kruckle, president of TED Inc. "Is it not valid to represent this constituency in advertising?"

Elizabeth Johns — a reporter for "E! Online" ("ABC Blocks Another 'Ellen' Ad," April 8) — shared this concern. As Johns aptly asked: "But what about all that flagrant advocacy of heterosexuality in those cruise ads for Carnival?"

Similar sentiments were expressed by Frank Rich, in his column for "The New York Times" ("The 'Ellen' Emotional Striptease," April 10). "Some sponsors — Chrysler, J.C. Penney — are taking a pass, but ABC's own courage also has its limits," said Rich. "It has turned down one 'Ellen' commercial — for a gay cruise-ship line — as too controversial."

"Am I the only parent who feels that the straight cruise-ship commercials starring Kathie Lee Gifford are more of a threat to my kids' view of heterosexuality than anything a gay sponsor could come up with?," he asked.

Not all critics were so understanding. Writing for the "Philadelphia Daily News" ("ABC's Dilemma," April 14), columnist Ellen Gray essentially sided with the sponsors. Gray defended ABC's excuse that "we try to keep the advertising broad-based." "Targeting a specific audience you know will be watching, in large numbers, at one particular time... is a niche strategy," said Gray, "and not one that could do anything for ABC, which still has to sell commercial time year-round, and not just for 15 seconds here and there."

According to Gray: "The breakthrough that ABC and 'Ellen' are making is an inclusive one, in which network television acknowledges, at last, that gays and lesbians are mainstream enough to be considered TV stars. The cruise that Olivia wants to advertise, by contrast, is exclusive. Unlike the 1994 Ikea ad that featured two men shopping for a table together as part of a larger campaign whose message was basically that all kinds of people shop for furniture, an ad for a lesbian travel agency suggests that some people choose to travel outside the mainstream."

"But if the concept of broadcasting, rather than narrowcasting, is to survive," Gray concluded, "sooner or later we're all going to have to get in the same boat."

Gray's notion of "inclusion" is heterosexism personified. While most critics noted that lesbian- and gay-themed television is "niche" programming, few asked WHY or if it should be so.

Whether it's "Ellen" or "Moesha," minority-based programming should NOT be dismissed so easily — or casually — as products of the "niche." Indeed, such programs ought to be promoted as remedial viewing for ALL audiences — especially those viewers who (in Gray's terms) "offend easily" in regard to minority images.

Homophobic bias aside, another trait has marred much of the response to "Ellen" and Olivia. Even critics who interrogated the politics of heterosexism failed to question the broader "politics of consumerism," which are obviously at issue here.

In their book "Channels of Desire: Mass Images and the Shaping of American Consciousness," authors Stuart and Elizabeth Ewen have framed this basic (and basically overlooked) point. "The politics of consumption must be understood as something more than what to buy, or even what to boycott," they argue.

"At a time when for many of us the possibility of meaningful change seems to elude our grasp, the question of consumption has immense social and political implications," the Ewens explain. "To establish popular initiative, consumerism must be transcended — a difficult but central task facing all people who still seek a better way of life."

Unfortunately, questions of "consumerism" are typically left to the academic or alternative (rather than the popular)

ACTION ALERT! Regardless of ABC's decision to allow a lesbian "Ellen," the network's rejection of Olivia is perniciously homophobic; challenge this lack of broadcast standards by contacting: ABC, Broadcast Standards Department, 77 W. 66th Street, New York, NY 10023-6201, tel. 212-456-7777, fax. 212-456-2381, e-mail abcaudr@abc.com, web http://abc.com.

Copy all correspondence to ABC's parent company: Walt Disney Co., 500 S. Buena Vista Street, Burbank, CA 91521, tel 818-560-1000, fax 818-560-1930.

Additional Contacts: Frank Rich, "The New York Times," 229 W 43rd Street, New York, NY 10036, tel. 212-556-1234, fax 212-556-3690, e-mail Frrich@nytimes.com; Ellen Gray, "Philadelphia Daily News," Box 7788, Philadelphia, PA 19101, fax 215-854-5852, e-mail elgray@phillynews.com; Mark Johnson, Media Director, NGLTF, 2320 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009, tel. 202-332-6483 (ext. 3314), e-mail mfjohnson@ngltf.org; E! Entertainment Television, 5670 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036; Ted Kruckle, President, TED Inc., 245 W. 29th Street, New York, NY 10001, tel. 212-564-6367.

Related Actions: Media watcher Scott Miller is seeking "volunteers to record the commercials that run in your markets when 'Ellen's coming-out episode airs." "I want to be able to breakdown the national sponsors, as well as record some of the regional advertisers," says Miller. "I will then send a report on who the advertisers were so we can thank and encourage them for their support." E-mail inquiries to: leliorisen@aol.com.

The Campaign For Equal Rights At Chrysler (CFERAC) has encouraged individuals and groups to conduct pro-Ellen, anti-Chrysler demonstrations at their local dealership; Chrysler is among the major advertisers that have refused to buy airtime during "Ellen's" April 30 broadcast. For more information (including details on Chrysler's historically "sad record of treating gay, lesbian, bi and trans persons"), contact: Ron Woods, CFERAC, tel. 810-545-7699, e-mail MichRook@aol.com.

TV GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

Michael Logan, "Soaps" columnist for the VERY widely circulated "TV Guide" (April 19-25), recently filed a report on "The Gay and the Restless." Logan details the career moves of actor Chris Bruno, who has played a gay school teacher on "All My Children" for the last two years [see "MEDIAlert!," Feb. 12-18, 1996]. Bruno announced that he will not renew his contract with the show, though he has "agreed to return on a recurring basis — Thanksgiving, Christmas, whatever the writers need me for."

In sketching the development of "Michael Delaney" (Bruno's groundbreaking "AMC" character), Logan raises a critical issue. As he reports: "The character was even given a boyfriend, Brad (Daniel McDonald), but their scenes — usually set in the safety of a restaurant — were downright antiseptic."

"One must appreciate the dilemma," Logan writes. "If 'AMC' didn't acknowledge Michael's sexuality in SOME way, it would be a cheat — especially to the gay community; but if the show acknowledged it too overtly, there'd be hell to pay in the Bible Belt."

Though Logan broaches a point missed by many other TV columnists, he might have taken it a bit further. For in fact, organized opponents of the "Bible Belt" object to ANY less-than-defamatory portrayal of homosexuality. Even when sex-less, gay and lesbian school teachers are still perceived as a threat.

Moreover, the asexual portrayal of Michael and Brad (patently biased when compared to "AMC's" treatment of heterosexual couples) is a "cheat" for ALL audiences. The straight community is also deprived of fairness — and a fuller opportunity to grow in awareness.

"AMC" creator Agnes Nixon "conceived and championed" her gay characters "despite strong concerns at ABC," Logan reports. "Yet she defends the lack of on-screen intimacy."

"This is nothing new," Nixon claims. "I've spent 35 years being damned if I do and damned if I don't."

According to Nixon: "Anticipation is always better than realization. Besides, if they turned off the TV set, we wouldn't get ANY message across."

AMC's executive producer, Francesca James, apparently agrees. "When Michael came out, there was a lot of viewer outrage," says James. "So when we gave him a love interest, we thought they'd REALLY go nuts — but they didn't. From that standpoint, this is a victory."

A victory in battle, perhaps, but not the war. Indeed, James comments only underscore the need — and capacity — for doing better and more. As the viewers are progressively less "nuts," why not give Michael — and every other gay, lesbian, trans or bi character — an even fuller, fairer love interest?

If producers are going to be damned in any event, they might as well be damned for doing what's REALLY right.

ACTION ALERT! While its groundbreaking gay characters are worthy of support, "AMC" should nevertheless be reminded that there is still ground to break; counsel this soap to do MORE of the right thing. Contact: "All My Children," ABC Daytime, 77 W. 66th Street, New York, NY 10023-6201, fax 212-456-2381, e-mail daytime@ccabc.com (or abcaudr@abc.com), web http://abc.com.

Comments can be copied to the: Letters Department, "TV Guide," Radnor, PA 19088 (correspondence NOT intended for publication should be sent to Jack Curry, Managing Editor, "TV Guide," Box 500, Radnor, PA 19088-0500, web http://www.tvguide.com).

GENE BLUES

"Americans are more likely to support gay rights, drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs, and funding for research on mental illness if they think certain behaviors are determined primarily by heredity and genes rather than upbringing and environment." So says a recent poll, conducted on behalf of Bozell Worldwide (a global marketing firm) and "U.S. News & World Report" magazine.

Touted as a "unique collaboration to examine quality of life issues and American's concerns with values," the new survey was reported by "PR Newswire" (April 12) and provided fodder for a major cover story in "U.S. News" (April 21). At turns provocative and intriguing, this coverage also reveals a not-so-unique bias in the media's approach to "gay genes."

In the survey itself, questions asking respondents to "think specifically about homosexuality" (#17) were followed directly by questions regarding "mental illnesses," "alcoholism," and "drug addiction" (#18). Whatever the scientific rationale, this linkage made its way unfortunately into the mainstream press -- with only a modest effort to disentangle notions of "gay" and "sick."

In his "U.S. News" article -- "The Politics of Biology" -- reporter Wray Herbert begins by discussing "the view of mental illness as a brain disease." For seven pages, the story goes on to offer similar takes on: VIOLENCE ("How can an act of vandalism or a bank robbery be rooted in DNA?"), MENTAL ILLNESS ("Are psychiatric disorders diseases?"), ALCOHOLISM ("Heredity might be involved in some kinds of alcoholism. But no gene can make you buy a bottle of Scotch") and, lastly, HOMOSEXUALITY ("Gay-rights advocates once argue that homosexuality was a matter of lifestyle choice. Now they stress genes and destiny").

Though the inclusion of sexual identity on such a laundry list might be defensible, it is obliquely explained here. To transition from the topic of alcoholism to homosexuality, Herbert explains: "It would be a mistake to focus only on biological explanations of psychopathology; the cultural shift is much broader than that."

To be fair, the reporter DOES raise a number of important points — and he does so adequately, at least. "U.S. News" effectively conveys the dual-edged nature of biological determinism, which can have "paradoxical consequences at times, leading to disdain rather than sympathy for the disadvantaged, and marginalization rather than inclusion."

As Herbert reports, "It's probably no coincidence that the biologizing of culture has accompanied the country's shift to the political right...." With regard to homosexuality, deterministic arguments — "that biological status conveyed legal status, and protection under the law" — are precarious at best.

"A generation ago, the gay community was at war with organized psychiatry, arguing (successfully) that sexual orientation was a lifestyle choice and ought to be deleted from the manual of disorders," Herbert explains. "Recently the same community was celebrating new evidence that homosexuality is a biological (and perhaps genetic) trait, not a choice at all."

Heeding "history's warning," however, Herbert points out that "homosexuals were not given extra sympathy or protection" in the Third Reich's passion for eugenics. As in the past, "a new eugenics movement" is being used by contemporary bigots to classify homosexuality — again — as a disease (chronic or otherwise).

Continued on Next Page

Candace Cont. from P. 7

of conservatism and I think that that's maybe speeded up the activism process for a lot of people. Living here, when Amendment 2 happened, there was no ignoring it. I'm sure that there were people living in more rural areas of Colorado who didn't even know about Amendment 2 until it was time to go to the polls. But here, you all got a very quick education about hatred and intolerance. When you live with a threat every day, you tend to be more on the ready, and more able to react quickly to things. And knowing and meeting the people who work with Ground Zero, I know that you all are prepared. It's like the Boy Scouts! [laughing]

I was really inspired by your book, The Accidental Activist.

Thank you. It means a lot. One never knows what the end product is going to finally be like and how it's going to be received, but when Kris [Pratt] and I set out to write it, the one thing we wanted to make sure was that anybody could pick it up and read it and understand, and that's what people have been telling me.

It was definitely very clear – you made the issues interesting to read about and easy to understand. I learned a lot that I hadn't known about what's really going on in politics in the US. It made me so angry!

Good! You understand the kind of fire that helped me jump into this. People keep saying, you've been thrust into this, you've been pushed into this, but it isn't true. I jumped. Headfirst. Because I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore. Something has to get people going, and for me it was realizing what people are really saying out there, including family members.

Speaking of family members, in your book, you wrote about trying fruitlessly for years to get your brother, Newt Gingrich, to talk with you about his policies toward gay and lesbian people. Have you managed to do that yet?

Unfortunately, no. The few times that I've seen him have not, in my opinion, been appropriate forums to question him.

Do you have hopes of ever having that conversation with him?

Oh, yeah, I still hope for something like that, but also, I'm not beating my head against his door or against a wall trying to make it happen. I'm happy and I think I'm doing a good thing by being out in the public. He is the Speaker of the House, yes, but he's just one guy. And I think it's more important to talk to all the people out there rather than try to talk to someone who has pretty much shown me that he doesn't want to.

How supportive has the rest of your family been of you and what you're doing?

For the most part they have been supportive. Mom at first didn't understand – the first time I went to DC for a leadership conference and lobby workshop, she said, "You're not going down there to drag Newtie's name in the mud, are you?" So I sat down and explained that I was not doing this just to attack him, or to bring him down, but instead to educate the public. Now, although I don't think they are quite there yet, they get the basic concept. Particularly the issue of workplace discrimination. When the Employment Non-Discrimination Act was voted on last fall, my mother said, "if a gay can do the job, that's what matters, and nobody should treat them any differently." As far as my extended family goes, I'm happy to say I've discovered I have a cousin, Darryl, who is a gay man!

What would you say is the one most important thing that gays and lesbians could do to increase tolerance in this country?

Come out. It was my first message as an activist, and it's still going to be my message even after we have our rights. There are far too many people out there who only hear myths and misconceptions, who only get Pat Robertson or Jim Dobson's version of what a gay person is. Being open and honest with them shows them there is nothing to be afraid of. Take the example of Ellen [Degeneres] coming out [on her television series "Ellen"]. The antigay folks claim that the show is promoting homosexuality, but it isn't. It's showing people the truth, and that's what they [the homophobes] don't like. They'd rather have the general public believe that we're demons, that we're freaks, that we're abnormal. Seeing realistic portrayals of gays on television, I'm sure, just bugs the crap out of them, because it's undoing the years of work that they've put into convincing people that we're freaks!

How do you think things will change in this country in terms of tolerance and acceptance for lesbians and gays by the year 2000?

I'm confident that things will change for the better. When you said 2000, I immediately thought of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, because we used to always say that by the year 2000 we were going to have it passed. But I also recognize that legislation doesn't change people's attitudes. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 didn't make racism go away. There's still racism. And so even when we have all our rights, whether that's 2000, or 2010, or whenever (and we will get them!), there are still going to be homophobic people out there. So, while legislation is very important, I think educating people through our lives, and through our family members' lives, is really what's going to change people's attitudes about gays. Eventually people will realize that we are families and that ours are just as important as other people's. They will realize that it's wrong to treat people differently for something that has nothing to do with their qualifications for getting a job, or a loan, or a mortgage.

Have you ever thought about running for political office yourself?

I don't know. If somewhere down the line somebody convinces me that running for office would be more effective than what I'm doing now, I might consider it. But it's certainly not anything that I have on my radar screen right now.

You seem to be a really optimistic person. Optimism seems to be a big part of your work and your life.

I think you lessen your life if you are always pessimistic about things. I really believe that every single day it gets better. Because every single day, somewhere, someone has come out to a friend or family member; every day someone has recognized that there's legal discrimination out there. It's also easier for me to be optimistic. It definitely helps me in responding to negative ignorant people – like the kind who call in on talk shows. But also, the people who hear my message help me stay optimistic because of the things they say to me. Sometimes I'll be walking through an airport and someone will come up to me and thank me and maybe share a piece of their life. Many more things point me towards being optimistic than the other way.

That's so great. Thank you so much for being here.

Thank you!

Medialert

Continued from P. 16

Herbert also cites Philip Kitcher — philosopher and author of "The Lives to Come" — who criticizes "gene talk," or the "simplistic shorthand for talking about genetic advances." Specifically, Kitcher suggests that "public discourse may need to include more scientific jargon — not a lot, but some — so as not to oversimplify the complexity of the gene-environment interaction."

Kitcher's point can be extended, generally, to a critique of the "public discourse" on sexual identity. In mainstream magazines such as "U.S. News," the subject of homosexuality could also benefit from more "complex" reporting — to include the related "jargon" of homophobia and heterosexism, for instance.

In reporting that the "gay community was celebrating" new biological evidence, Herbert himself is guilty of oversimplification. From the start, homosexual critics have recognized the complexities of such research. Dissecting the "politics of biology" is old news to (most) lesbian and gay journalists.

Ultimately, Herbert concludes: "More and more experts, including dedicated biologists, sense that the power of genetics has been oversold and that a correction is needed."

But corrected how? And oversold by whom?

Certainly, the media themselves are not guilt-less. Both alternative and mainstream journalists have "oversold" and oversimplified the biological spin on homosexuality. Some of the attitudes recently polled by "U.S. News" are quite possibly based in the magazine's own prior record of reporting.

Without diminishing its contributions to social science or political debate, the "U.S. News" poll also serves as an inadvertent measure of the media's diminished scope. When opposed to other stories — of gay art, transsexual history, or lesbian psychology (to name but a few) — stories of "gay genetics" have been told with more frequency and fervor in the mainstream press.

Historically, a similar spin characterized the reporting on gender and race in America. An over-emphasis on biology actually "dehumanizes" the lesbian and gay community — which is made up of much more than designer genes.

ACTION ALERT! Survey the "complexity" of reporting on the queer beat, and keep the press apprised of your results; feedback regarding the "News" poll should be sent to: Harrison Rainie, Editor, "U.S. News & World Report," 2400 N Street N.W., Washington, DC 20037-1196, tel. 202-955-2000, fax 202-955-2685, e-mail letters@usnews.com, web http://www.usnews.com.

Additional Contacts: The "U.S. News/Bozell Worldwide Nature-Nurture Survey" was conducted by KRC Research, which polled a nationwide sample of 1,000 adults (margin of error +/- 3.1 percent); a copy of the survey can be obtained by calling: Fax-On-Demand, tel. 800-685-4573, access code 123, document #805.

MEDIALERTS

Distributed as a community press service since 1992, "MEDIAlert!" [TM] is a biweekly, advocacy-oriented column of media criticism, primarily focused on lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender issues.

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AUTHOR NOTES

Al Kielwasser is the editor of "Gay People, Sex and the Media" (New York: Haworth Press). His media criticism and research have appeared widely, in both mainstream and academic publications (including the "Journal of American Culture," "Journal of Homosexuality," "Journal of Popular Culture," and "Critical Studies in Mass Communication"); he was twice elected Chair of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation/San Francisco Bay Area.

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QUEER REVIEWS

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Eternal Hostility: The Struggle Between Theocracy and Democracy

Frederick Clarkson

Common Courage Press, 1997

Paper, $15.95

CLARKSON'S BOOK EXPLORES STRUGGLE BETWEEN THEOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY

by Johnathan Westminster

(special from the FREEDOM WRITER)

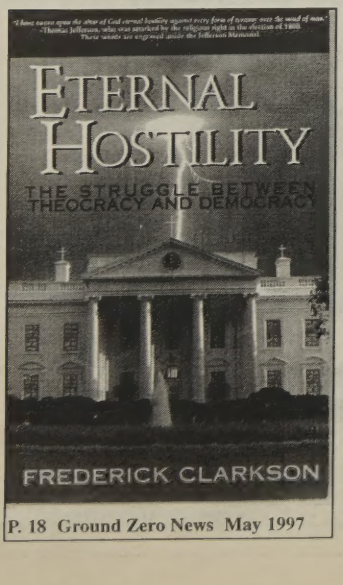
The radical religious right is a well-organized, well-funded political force in the United States. The movement has a clear ideology based on a literal interpretation of the Bible. The radical religious right also has a clear political agenda: the replacement of traditional American secular constitutional democracy with some form of theocracy. And despite the fact that the movement consists of a minority of eligible voters--around 15% by its own estimates--the radical religious right presents a clear and present danger to the future well-being of every American who does not subscribe its views.

Although religious political extremists are still relatively small in number, one should not be deceived. In the German elections of 1930 the Nazi Party drew only about 15% of the vote. Yet Hitler took power in less than three years, even in the face of two strong, well-organized parties, the communists and the socialists.

In order to provide tools to oppose religious political extremists, Frederick Clarkson's book provides well-researched, well-argued, and well-written information. Following in the footsteps of such scholars as Russ Bellant, Chip Berlet, Sara Diamond, Skipp Porteous, and Robert Boston, Clarkson lays out a detailed and frightening analysis of what we face in dealing with the radical religious right.

He devotes chapters to such subjects as the radical religious right's two centuries-old refusal to accept the firmly established constitutional principle of separation of church and state; what the true political status of their movement is, and the sometimes little recognized importance of Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church in it; Christian Reconstructionism (which provides the underlying theocratic ideology to the movement); an analysis of its main political fronts, such as the Christian Coalition, the American Family Association, Concerned Women for America, Paul Weyrich's Free Congress Foundation, and umbrella groups such as the Coalition on Revival; as well as the new male-chauvinist front, Promise Keepers.

Clarkson also devotes a chapter to the growing role of violence in the promotion of the far right agenda (a matter of increasing importance since Richard Neuhaus, Chuck Colson, Robert Bor,, Cal Thomas, and others of their ilk now tell us that if they don't get their way through the ballot box, violence will become "unavoidable," and that's all right because its use will be pursuant to God's will.)



The proposals of what to do about this clear and present danger is surprisingly thin. In the last chapter, Clarkson writes about "Defending Democracy: Rethink the Strategy." He presents a number of important measures, from registering more voters, conducting more research on the radical right, and identifying and exposing the "Christian Right's contradictions and weaknesses." But a good defense will take you only so far; it is the offensive tactics that are so essential.

In the political game, having an offense good enough to win means having a strong ideological base, as does the radical religious right. To get more people to vote, and vote for democracy, we have to offer something positive to vote for, not simply something negative to vote against, in my view, a political ideology built around the promotion of traditional American constitutional democracy is the key to victory.

Nonetheless, Clarkson has made a major contribution to the necessary work of analysis and exposure of the radical religious right and its agenda. We, the American people need to mobilize in defense of our traditional secular American constitutional democracy before it is too late.

Johnathan Westminster is the author of *The 15% Solution: A Political history of American Fascism 2001-2022*. Copies of Frederick Clarkson's book are available at Chinook Books or by mail from the Institute for First Amendment Studies.

GZN Editor's Note: I have had the opportunity to read both Clarkson's and Westminster's books and found both of high value. In fact, I had intended to d this review until I found Westminster's and took the easy way out. GZN did review 15% Solution in its November, 1996 Issue. Westminster was laborious to read because of the weight of information contained and a necessity to build memories from extrapolated current information. It was, nonetheless, intriguing and mind opening as well as enjoyable. It also has invaluable notes and bibliography.

Clarkson's book does what I believe more such works should achieve. I think of myself as fairly well-advised on t he subject of the far right and religious political extremism. Yet, I am often plagued with poor connection between the facts, with an inability to connect the various elements into one, cohesive vision. Clarkson re-explored and added to those facts with me and proceeded to interweave them into the movement that is the Theocratic Right. It is mind-awakening and will distress the reader, both because it is happening under our noses and because we have missed seeing so much of it.

Clarkson's Bibliography and notes are also invaluable. Read both books--but start with Clarkson's. Frank Whitworth

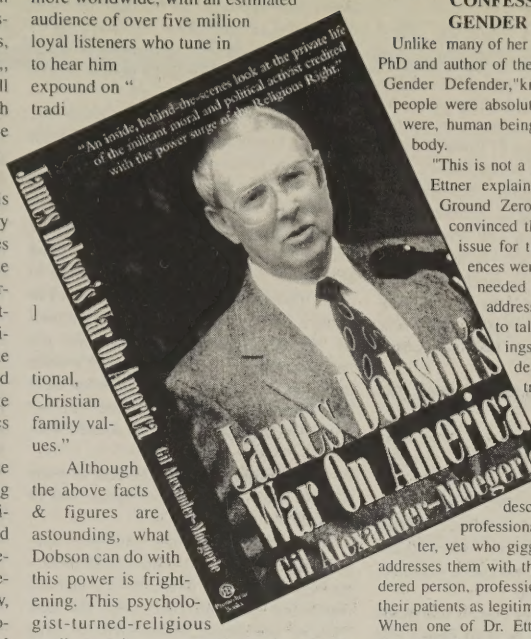
James Dobson's War on America

by Gil Alexander-Moegerle

Prometheus Books, 1997

$25.95

Best-selling religious author and White House Family Conference task-force member James Dobson formed, in 1977, the Focus on the Family corporation, an ultra-right wing group that currently boasts a $100 million annual budget and a mailing list of 3.5 million families. He hosts a daily half-hour radio show carried by 1,500 stations in North America and 3,400 more worldwide, with an estimated audience of over five million loyal listeners who tune in to hear him expound on " tradi



] tional, Christian family values."

Although the above facts & figures are astounding, what Dobson can do with this power is frightening. This psychologist-turned-religious media guru has a personal agenda so ambitious that John Hockenberry of ABC News has noted, "On Capitol Hill, he's treated like some kind of powerful lobbyist." When Dobson opposes or supports legislation and calls on his followers to support him in pressuring Washington, it is common for the Hill to be bombarded with 500,000 to one million phone calls and letters within hours. Dobson lobbies Washington more powerfully than any other individual or organization within the religious right. But he does so without answering to the larger public for his positions, avoiding contact with the mainstream press and shunning the talk-show circuit. And, like many moralist who call themselves "God's chosen," Dobson has plenty to hide.

With such power, it seems the safest place to be is on Dobson's side...but what if you weren't? What if he was against you? The answer: he could very well destroy the freedoms that you now have and hold dear.

James Dobson's War on America offers an insightful and detailed expose of this religious power-broker and his strong-arm corporation. Based on ten year's experience with the Focus on the Family Organization, the author reveals the very private world of James Dobson--his ultra-conservative religious beliefs; his deepest inner feelings; the marketing formula that helped him amass a fortune; his inner rage; his intense racism; sexism, and homophobia; the internal difficulties that led to boardroom allegations of mismanagement of donor funds; and his radical political plan for America.

The most telling description of James Dobson might be put succinctly: he is not what he appears to be. This book is a must-read for all people who hold their personal freedoms very dear. At this printing, local bookstores are reporting that this book is their second highest seller. It is available at Chinook Books.

CONFESSIONS OF A GENDER DEFENDER

Unlike many of her colleagues, Randi Ettner, PhD and author of the book "Confessions of a Gender Defender,"knew that transgendered people were absolutely what they said they were, human beings trapped in the wrong body.

"This is not a psychiatric disorder," Dr. Ettner explains in an interview with Ground Zero. "Years ago I became convinced that this was a legitimate issue for these people,their experiences were absolutely real, that we needed to be respectful and address these issues and not try to talk them out of their feelings.It is society's inability to deal with the issues of transgendered people that was causing professionals to label these people as 'crazy.'"

But crazy is how Dr. Ettner is often described by her colleagues; professionals who should know better, yet who giggle and twitter when she addresses them with the issues of the transgendered person, professionals who refuse to treat their patients as legitimate human beings.

When one of Dr. Ettner's patients had been denied medical treatment for a sinus infection because it was against the doctor's religion to treat people like that, Dr. Ettner and her husband, a family practioner, were outraged. They formed a medical alliance that still exists today.

The Ettners receive a tremendous amount of criticism and harassment for their work with transgender people. Their own colleagues often question the Ettner's sexuality, often asking if she or her husband have had "the operation" or assume that they personally deal with one or more of the transgendered issues.

"In a society that tells people to be true to themselves, to be who they truly are,"Dr. Ettner explains, "society then turns around and tells these people to quit whining and be what your genitals tell you to be. They're not allowed to honestly explore the 'Who am I' question that we all ask ourselves. That's why they end up in my office."

Many transgendered people who begin their transition often loose family, friends, jobs and everything they've ever known for what they can become. And for what they become. Dr. Ettner gets blamed, harassed and even threatened.

"It's as if people think its my fault that their husband,boyfriend, son or daughter chose to change their gender," Dr. Ettner says, when in fact all she's done is affirm who they truly are.That' exactly that kind of ignorance and hate that Dr. Ettner hopes to change with her book.

"The more I heard their stories," she said of her transgendered clients, "the more I felt compelled to write them down. I wanted to teach everyone out there that what these people experience is very real, that it is not a disorder."

Raising awareness involved far more that Ettner anticipated. Her first publisher told her that only people who would read it were transgendered people, and "frankly there just aren't that many out there," Ettner remembers. The publisher suggested a gay press. "But I wanted to reach everyone, not just the gay and transgendered community who understand better than most. I would have been just preaching to the choir."

There are more transgendered people out there than we realize, according to Ettner, living in closets of isolation, in unhappy marriages, in narrow-minded and stifling homes, and buried in far too many graveyards.

"Confessions" was finally published by Chicago Spectrum. It is available a Barnes and Noble Bookstore

Dr. Randi Ettner plans to visit Colorado Springs in mid-June.For more information please call Ground Zero at 635-6086.

Don't Trust Menwith Balls

Longtime advocates for gay and lesbian rights, Dr. Donna Johnson and Rita Ague have names that are very familiar in the Colorado Springs peace and social justice community. Both women, part of a five member group of Colorado Springs peace activists which included Bill Sulzman, Loring Worble and Cary Foster, returned in late March from a European space conference and peace networking trip. Their reflections regarding the trip appeared in the April 7, 199
Citizens for Peace in Space newsletter.

FROM DONNA JOHNSON

The highlight of my networking trip was a two day stop on the North Yorkshire moors between Harrogate and Otley. There, in sight of Menwith Hill, U.S. spy base, a small band of non-violent resisters maintain a roadside WoMenwith Hill peace camp, in the spirit of the Greenham Common women of the '80s. [Ed. note: A recent peace camp video is titled "Don't Trust Menwith Balls" and is available for viewing through the Colorado Springs CFPS office, 389-0644.] For nearly three years these women have kept a round-the-clock-presence to protest Men with Hill and similar U.S. space warfare and intelligence operations around the world. During this time, they have carried out hundreds of "actions" to expose the Base for what it is. Cary Foster and I were but two of more than 500 women who have stayed at the camp.

The first thing that struck my senses driving north from London (where, speaking of great sensory experiences, I had just visited the Tate Gallery) to the peace camp was the bucolic countryside - family-sized farms with brilliant green fields, miles of straight stone fences enclosing flocks of sheep with tiny lambs, flowering trees and bushes - as far as the eye could see. It was beautiful.

Then, in startling contrast, as we arrived at the peace camp, I saw on the horizon a bizarre, surrealistic, science fiction looking scene. Twenty-five giant white radomes against the grey-white sky. I had seen the radomes at Buckley and Falcon many times, but this, in the middle of such an idyllic countryside, shocked my sensibilities. It was so out of place (even though I can't imagine where it might belong).

For the next two days we listened and talked with the women who have put their lives on the line to make Menwith Hill a household word in England. When they began, the British government refused to acknowledge that the base was a U.S. intelligence operation. Since then some of them have been on the base hundreds of times. Almost daily someone does something at the base that results in arrest or puts her at risk of arrest. The penalties are getting worse as the government gets nervous and cracks down. But in the process, they are making national news and raising the consciousness of the English people. They are a beautiful example of using direct action to put pressure on the military establishment and showing a positive example of life affirming ways to live together. Life is simple there, in the half-dozen or so small caravans (trailers). No running water or electricity, for example. Heat is provided by little wood stoves made from propane tanks. The peace camp, in its own way, was as beautiful as the countryside...

FROM RITA AGUE

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed."

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

"When power leads man toward arrogance, poetry reminds him of his limitations. When power narrows the areas of man's concern, poetry reminds him of the richness and diversity of his existence. When power corrupts, poetry cleanses, for art establishes the basic human truths which must serve as the touchstone of our judgment."

JOHN F. KENNEDY

MASTERS OF RACE TO MASTERS OF SPACE

Dear Mom, (the postcard read), I do not believe you would like what your favorite poet's/pioneers! oh pioneers! are doing here, there and everywhere. I'll explain when I get home...

Oh, I thought you were on holiday, doing some shopping...*she'd misunderstood about Cassini - thought I was talking about an Italian designer of haute couture..*

But why are we putting such a dangerous satellite into space loaded with all that plutonium fuel if we could be developing solar power like the Europeans are planning. ...*do I dare suggest that she and her retired friends who hold shares of G.E. and Westinghouse and Lockheed Martin, etc., go to a stockholders meeting and ask that question...*

And, honey, you're going to have to explain again about those golf balls. I was never much of a golfer, although goodness knows I tried for your father's sake...***she'd not comprehended when I tried to explain that radomes are like large golf balls...***

But how can that be when they're talking about having to cut Medicare...*she's listening now, when I talk about the balls and their relationship to the twenty-eight to thirty-five billion dollars that is spent annually without knowledge or approval of Congress...*

We traveled throughout the Yorkshire Dales on our way to Scotland. Absolutely lovely. Why in the world would our country need to have a spy station there. ...*and in a small Bavarian hamlet, Mom, and in isolated places all over the globe, Mom, and in Denver and here in Colorado Springs, right in our own back yard...*

And you're telling me that by using those huge golf balls, they can listen into our telephone conversations right now if they want to, and hear everything we're saying...*and retrieve and read our faxes and email messages, especially if we use certain words in them, and even snuff us out with a smart bomb as we use a cellular phone, if they don't like our international political power position...*

But this is all so incredible and so disturbing. I remember in 1937, the year after your father and I were married, the Nazi's were telling the Germans, and the whole world, that they were the "Masters of Race," and we ended up in World War II --and now you're telling me that our military people are walking around wearing patches on their arms telling us and the whole world that they are "Masters of Space." This is insane--Why haven't I read about it or heard it on the news...*why indeed...*

For more information on the Cassini Project, on the U.S. Militarization of Space, and on "Master of Space-:
American Friends Service Committee, 1664 Lafayette st., Denver, CO 80218 (303) 832-4789
Citizens for Peace in Space, P.O. Box 915, Colorado Springs, CO 80901 (719) 389-0664
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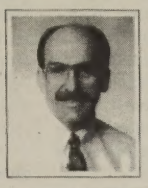

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